

4. B.  
Sinne no more,

1480. aa 7  
1-2  
OR

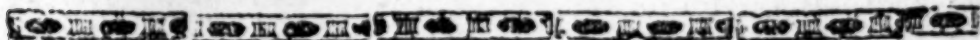
A SERMON PREACHED  
in the Parish Church of *Banbury* on  
Tuesday the fourth of March last past, vpon occa-  
sion of a most terrible fire that happened there on the Sab-  
bath day immediatly precedent, and within the space of foure  
houres was carried from the one end of the Towne to the other,  
with that fury, as continuing to burne all the night, and much of  
the next day, it consumed 103. dwelling houses, 20. kilne-  
houses, and other out-houses, to the number of 660.  
bayes and vpwards, together with so much malt and  
other graine and commodities, as amounted at  
the least to the value of twenty thou-  
sand pounds.

*The third time published and enlarged  
by the Author.*

WILLIAM WHATELY Vicar of *Banbury*.

2. PET. 3. 14.

*The heauens being on fire shall be dissolued, and the  
element shall melt with feruent heat.*



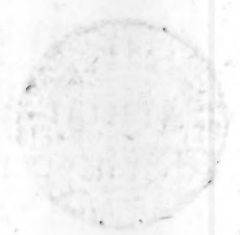
LONDON.

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without Newgate, 1630.

SHANE NO MORE

OR

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To his welbeloued neighbours the  
Inhabitants of the Borough of *Banbury* in the  
County of *Oxon*, the Author wisheth all hap-  
pinesse, dedicating to them with this little  
*Booke, himselfe and all that bee*  
*can doe.*



Eare Brethren, A true  
Christian is the onely  
happie man. Hee is a  
gayner by all things. If  
his state decrease, his  
sinne decreaseth too If  
his body be sicke, his  
corruptions sicken al-  
so: If his outward man decay, his inward man  
is strengthened. If earth fauour him lesse, hee  
runs faster to heauen: If friends proue vnkinde,  
he trusts more in the kindnes of God. If death  
kill his body, it kills sinne too, his greatest ene-  
my, which, before, cannot be quite killed. But  
this happinesse falleth not into the mouth of

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

a good man in his sleepe and in his dreames;  
without his working, labouring, endeavouring,  
The blessing of God casts not good things vp-  
on vs in such a carelesse fashion, to fauour our  
idlenesse. Wee must finde them by seeking;  
and attaine them by taking paines for them.  
He that would fetch gaine out of losse, must  
sweat for it. When I saw therefore the dam-  
mage which you had sustained in your states,  
I bethought my selfe of helping you to reape  
some profit by that distresse. To that end I  
meditated these things, and spake them to you  
at our next publike meeting, To the same end,  
I haue made my thoughts legible, putting them  
into your hands, and presenting them vnto  
your eyes, that you might not be able to for-  
get them vnlesse you will put on wilfulnesse.  
Accept them as signes of my tender care ouer  
you, and O that euery man amongst you  
would get this book into his house and hands,  
and reade it more than once, and study it with  
serious attention. I know it is not of any great  
value in it selfe, but it is particularly and pecu-  
liarly fitted for your present vse, and in that re-  
gard may more profit you, than a better  
treatise in another kinde. I know mine owne  
wants

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

wants well enough; neither doe I long to be publike. Yet now haue I put my selfe forth of my priuate study, for your greater benefit, in hope also to deriue the fruit of your calamity to many more besides your selues. I would it might please the diuine Maiesty, to incline your willes to the following of the counsell which this booke presents vnto you. And O that he would also stirre vp the hearts of all those that shall reade these lines, to pray for your profiting by the stroke and withall, out of compassion to your wants, to bee as forward for your supply as some haue beene already. How happy should this correction be ( and how blessed the wise corrector ) which should at once further your reckoning by procuring your amendment, and further the reckoning of many more by enlarging their bounty: and how happy should I account my selfe If I might become an happy instrument of both. On the bended knees of my soule I beg both, of him that can giue both, but the first in the first place. If our liues be better than before well are wee, though our states bee neuer, so plentifull as they were before: but, woe  
vnto



## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

vnto as if we recover our wealth, without re-  
forming our faults. The all-powerfull and most  
gracious God, worke the former in you, the  
latter for you: with this prayer I leaue you to  
his goodnesse, and rest.

*Your well-wishing Pastor,*

**William Whately.**

From my study in Banbury  
May 26. 1628.





*Sinne no more.*

OR

# A Sermon preached AT BANBURY.

**W***Elbeloued Neighbours,  
Friends, and Brethren in  
our Lord; To well prepared  
Hearers, a Preface is both  
tedious, and superfluous:  
such, I presume, the pre-  
sent hand of God hath made  
you, more than any speech of mine can do; for sight is  
a far more powerful & commanding sense, than hea-  
ring. Accept therefore, I pray you, of a double errand,  
which I haue to do vnto you; one in mine owne name,  
another in the Name of God. From my selfe, I  
would speake, partly, to them that haue beene smit-*

ten with this heavy stroke; partly, to them that haue escaped it. To the former, by way of condoling with them first, then of conforing them. To the latter, to congratulate with them, and to instruct them. Had I beene a stranger, to lodge amongst you for a night alone; or a traeller, to bait in your Towne for an houre, or passe thorow your streets for a moment, yet I could not but haue sadly lamented so beavy a spectacle, the flaming of so many houses at once, the consuming of so much substance, the out-cries of so many persons, the desolation of so great a number of your dwellings; but being an inhabitant, borne, bred, and brought vp amongst you from mine infancie, and neuer absent from you aboue seuen yeeres, for learnings sake; and now at last a Minister amongst you, and Pastor ouer you, for the space of twentie yeeres together; I might be iustly charged to haue lost all sense and humanity, if I were not deeply touched with your calamitie. Giue mine eyes leaue therefore, to speake vnto you in the language of teares: and seeing I heard so generall a cry for water, water, the other day; let me also cry water, water; and let all our eyes ioyne together, to powre forth a streame of water, sufficient to quench the remainders of those flames which are yet burning amongst you, yea, to quench  
the

the glowing fire of Gods displeasure for our sinnes, which haue iustly kindled all these flames amongst vs. There haue beene mournfull Prophets in Israel whose errand was to take vp a lamentation ouer their people, and call their hearts to mourning and sadnesse; such an one it becommeth me to bee at this time, and in this place, and, O that I could performe it effectually. For where should we rather weepe than here? in the presence, and in the eares, of our most gracious Father, who hath louingly smitten vs; and loueth to see his children sensible of his blowes, neither can endure more than our selues; such hard hearted sonnes and daughters, as will make nothing of a beating. Moderate teares are pleasing to God that smiteth, who doubtlesse would haue his children sorry, that they haue made him angry: neither can any thing lesse become a Christian than senselesse stoicisme. Moderate teares are profitable to men that are smitten, who be worse than diuers beasts, if they profit not by stripes, and cannot wax better by them, if they refuse to smart vnder them. Let vs therefore weepe together, because we haue beene afflicted together, yea, because wee haue altogether sinned and procured affliction; weepe you that haue lost your goods or houses in whole, or in part, and let mee



weepe with you; because the Lords hand hath  
falne vpon you, and your sinnes haue prouoked his  
hand; weepe you that haue beheld the losses of  
your brethren, because your selues haue deserued  
the crosse as well as they, and cannot tell how soone  
you may feele it. Weepe you my neerer neighbours  
of the Towne, that stood amazed and perplexed  
with fearefull suspence, hoping, and yet doubting  
what would become of your owne goods and houses.  
Weepe you my remoter neighbours of the country,  
that stood astonished in the beholding of such a re-  
medilasse accident, and could not haue leasure then  
to weepe for wondring, or helping, or both. Weepe  
you that were then absent, and saw it not, but haue  
beene this morning spectators of so great a desola-  
tion, as I thinke few of your eyes haue euer seene be-  
fore. Weepe out of feare, as children, that see their  
fathers wrath in beating their brethren, and know  
not who must suffer next. Weepe in charity, to shew  
your selues feeling members of the same body,  
whereof when one member is grieued, all doe sym-  
pathize. Weepe in pity to helpe to ease the burthens of  
the distressed, who cannot but finde their crosses mi-  
tigated, in finding a part of their sorrowes borne by  
others. Weepe in obedience, to fulfill the most ex-  
presse commandement of our God, by weeping with  
them



them that weepe. Weepe as men, because you are witnesses of the miseries of men. Weepe as Christians, because they be Christians that suffer. Weepe as next neighbours, because your next neighbours and familiar acquaintance haue smarted. And let vs all lift up our voices and weepe, in the bearing of the Lord thy God, within his house, that seeing vs humbled vnder his holy hand, hee may know what course to take with vs, as once he said to Israel, after their erecting of the golden Calfe. The Lord compares himselfe to a father, that hangs betwixt anger and pity, resolved on neither, but inclined to that, that the carriage of his children may call for; by striking further if they stoope not, and desisting from stripes if they doe. Alas, alas, what a breach hast thou Lord made amongst vs? How many dwelling places are become desolate? How many inhabitants destitute of habitation? How many wealthy men, made lesse wealthy, and poore men more poore? How many rich men are become poore, and poore men beggers? How are the labours of many a father, Grand-father, great Grand-father, suddenly conuerted into smoake and rubbish, in the space of a day and night? O the raging fury of the tempestuous winds, when they haue once gotten fire and flame

within their blustering mouthes! O the hideous violence of fire and flames, when they haue gotten to themselues the wings of the wind to flie about withall! And O the loathsome odiousnesse of those wicked finnes of ours, which like fooles we loue so dearely, and bug so fast within our bosomes; yet alas, we see they cause a tender hearted father to burne in displeasure against vs. Weepe I pray you and spare not, but weepe like Christian men, yea, like men that are sanctified through the knowledge of Christianitie. Weepe not onely, nor chiefly, nor scarce at all, for the losse of your goods, the ruine of your houses, the impouerishing of your states, the wants that you may perhaps suffer; but weepe also, yea, weepe chiefly, and in a manner onely, for the finnes of your soules, the disorders of your liues, the priuate offences of your families, the publique offences of the towne, and particular transgressions of your persons. The teares of the flesh be fruitlesse teares, and the sorrowes of nature, barren sorrowes; but the teares of grace, and the mourning of the spirit, are a seed most precious and most fertile. O that wee could now sow them in great abundance for our future benefit. Hee shall gaine much by worldly losses, that turneth the grieve of his losses upon his finnes. But, my brethren, let not your weeping

weeping and lamentation bee like that of Rahel, whereof the Prophet foretelleth, that shee wept and would not be comforted: nay, but let mee goe on to giue you comfort, and doe you prepare your selues to take it. In truth, no grieffe is profitable to man, or pleasing to God, further than it tendeth to comfort, and endeth in it. As good not mourne at all, as drowne our selues in our owne teares: now therefore stop your weeping for a space, and let me become your comforter, and call you to reioycing in the midst of this crosse, and in despiight of it. What can better become a Minister of the Gospell, than to raise vp those that are sad and heauie in heart? and seeing we be furnished of meanes, to comfort the soule against its greatest and most intolerable euils; shall wee not bee able to reuiue it against any outward calamitie? Make your selues cheerefull therefore in the Lord your God, as once we read that Dauid did at Ziglag, when his case was worse than the worst of yours. For he had not alone lost his house and goods; but his wiues, and children to boot, and with them the loue of, in a manner, all his ancient souldiers, which (impuring their miserie to him) began at length to talke of stoning their Generall. And if you will but cleare vp your eyes a little from weeping, and  
cast



cast them upward, towards the Ruler of heauen, there is store of comfort in him, that can neuer lose that worthy title of the God of all comfort. For, my brethren, he hath lost nothing in this great losse of yours, neither is his state decayed, because some of yours be so; nor is he lesse wealthy in the lessening of your wealth. Suppose that one of your children had lost a groat or a testar, which it pleased one of you to giue him, would that losse vndo him, thinke you? must hee be starued or hunger-bitten because that poore peece of siluer could bee found no more? Or suppose some man of wealth and place, should haue had his out-houses burnt, in which the slaues and hinds of his family did wont to lodge? must they therefore embrace the rockes for a couering, as Iob speaketh? and be wet with the showers of heauen for want of conuenient lodging? O no my brethren, a wealthy master will prouide an house for his bondmen to put their heads in, and set vp a better, if a worse be burnt; and the many pounds that remaine in the fathers chest, shall supply the wants of a childe that hath lost his small stocke of a few shillings. God is your master, God is your father; and seeing a Christians riches are in Gods keeping, he must count himselfe to haue lost nothing, so long as God hath lost nothing. The Lord  
of



of Heauen hath as much money, and as much mercie now as euer bee had. Therefore should you bee as ioyful now as euer, and say with Dauid, the Lord is my shepherd, (as much since the fire as before) and therefore I am sure I shall not want. It is easie with God to restore you more then all this (and twice so much as this) which the raging flames haue deuoured: And if his neuer-deceiued wisdom see it fit for you, he will more than make vp your losses, and cause your latter end to be more plentiful than your beginnings, as it was once promised and performed to distressed Iob. I called vpon you to mourne before, not because you had lost your wealth, but because this crosse doth come from God, as a signe of his displeasure. I call vpon you now to be comforted, because the Lord will accept your humiliation, and shew himselfe reconciled. But say it should please your heauenly Father, to make your earthly portion scantier to your dying day, than it hath beene heretofore; yet haue you cause, my brethren, and most abundant cause, to comfort your soules in him, that hath granted you farre better things than those that are earthly. Hee hath left you himselfe, his sonne, his spirit, the hope of his kingdom, the promises of his Gospell, that rich and precious Iewell of Faith, and (that that Dauid thought

to be better than thousands of gold and siluer ) the iudgements of his mouth. He hath left you the spirituall blessings, wherewith hee hath blessed you in Christ, that by fixing your eyes on them ( the more in the absence of these meaner things, which did call your thoughts from them ) you might cause the consideration of these so surpassing excellent things, to make the losse of the trifles seeme nothing. A man loseth a payre of gloues, or knife, or handkerchiefe, out of his poket, but his purse ( wherein were many rich Jewels with store of gold and siluer ) hee loseth not; will that losse torment him, or breake his sleepe? God hath giuen thee, that art his childe, his spirit of adoption to seale thee to himselfe, the bloud of his Sonne to purge thee from thy sinnes, and the beginnings of holinesse, as an earnest penny of thy perfect happinesse, and (ball the losse of a few goods and a dirty house, make thee looke with a deiected countenance, or carrie a sad heart about with thee? O make it appeare that you count Gods fauour, Christs bloud, the Spirits power, riches enough, by ioying in these abundantly, euen then when ye want riches, Reioyce more that thy soule is freed from the danger of being euerlastingly burnt in those unquenchable flames of hell fire, than grieue that thy goods are burnt in the flames of this fire that

that is well neere already quenched, euen within the space of a day or two. Bee more glad that thou hast such an enduring substance laid vp in those celestiall habitations (whether neither theefe nor enemye, nor water nor fire can approach) as shall neuer be taken from thee by fire or any other accident, than be sad because thy worldly substance is much of it marred and consumed. If you haue spirituall eyes, shew it now by looking to things inuisible, and by taking with ioy the losse of your goods, euen in this manner also as the Saints of old did the losse of theirs in another meaning. It were a shame of all shames, if earthly losses should take away comfort from a Christian heart, that hath beauenly benefits remaining entire vnto it. Let them be tormented with comfortlesse griefes, at the losse of house and goods, that know not, nor haue, any thing better than house or goods: but for them which say they know that all this world is nothing, and professe that they expect an vndefiled and neuerfading inheritance in another world, for them (I say) to make a great mourning for so little a losse, when so incomparable gaines abide behinde to delight in, nothing can be more absurd and vnreasonable. Your Father hath store of those trifles which you want, he hath granted you store of things farre better

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than



than these; reioyce in him, reioyce in them, and I require you in Gods name, and as you be Christians, let not this crosse crush your hearts, what euer become of your estates. Yea verily brethren, those of you that haue felt and are like to feele most misery by the present chastisements, haue yet cause of comforting themselves in a thankfull acknowledgement of the greater miseries, which they might haue suffered, and haue escaped.

Are we not happy that more than halfe the Towne is left entire and vndefaced, though I thinke a third part haue passed thorow the flames? Are wee not happy that our goods and houses alone, nor our wiues and children, our limmes and bodies, haue beene seized vpon by the furie of this insufferable element? Had the wind and fire conspired against vs at midnight, as at none day; had they beene suffered to lie in ambush till wee had all betaken our selues to quiet rest, as they brake forth when we were all awake, and stirring abroad to serue God; no doubt but many a man had lost an arme, many a legge, many an eye, some their liues, many their children, many their wiues, many their friends; which would haue beene so suddenly surprized with the v unexpected comming of that greedy enemy, as they could not haue  
bethought



betbought themselves of a meanes in that haste, and in such darkenesse, either to haue fled from it, or drouen it from them.

Herein therefore acknowledge you the gentlenesse and clemencie of God, that did so moderate this chastisement, in regard of the season of its breaking forth, as that you escaped a farre greater misery than that which you haue sustained by it. Wee must as well looke from what we haue beene deliuered, as what wee haue endured, that our thankfulnesse may moderate our sorrows, and our ioy in the one, may temper our griefes for the other.

Take comfort therefore, how great soeuer thy losse is, that thy crosse is not greater: Take comfort in this, that your selues or your friends were not halfe burnt in your beds: Take comfort in this, that you haue receiued those heauenly vertues, which the fire cannot burne: take comfort, that God is still yours, still rich and all-sufficient; and in this take comfort too, that if you doe, as I hope you will, make a good vse of this, the Lord will finde a meanes to lade you with his blessings, and restore the things that the fire hath deuoured, as once he promiseth to doe, those that the Grasshoppers had eaten up. Mourn so before God, as thus to comfort

Your selues in God, and blessed be that mourning, blessed that comfort.

Now hauing thus setled your hearts, that came bleeding hither with Gods blowes, let me turne my speech to you that haue onely felt the wind of the stroake as it were, and not the smart of it, and some not so much as the wind: and with you, and for you, and for my selfe among the rest, let me blesse and praise God, and greatly reioyce in him, that hath spared the greater part of the Towne, quite contrarie to our feares and cries, that said we were all vndone, and that sure all the towne would be (as easily it might haue all beene) burnt. Blessed be God, that a part alone, and not the whole Borough, hath beene consumed, and that the greatest part remaineth to succour the lesser. Blessed be God that Banbury Towne alone, and not Banbury Country, kept so heavy a Sabbath, and sitteth in dust and ashes. Blessed be God, that many Townes at once had not felt what hauocke wind and fire can make when they meet together and ioyne their forces in one. This burning was terrible indeed, but nothing to that which we haue heard of, and some of our eyes haue seene in other countries, by name in Germany, whither a reuerend Diuine, not long since accompanying an Ambassadour, affirmed that his  
owne

owne eyes told there at one instant, the number of six and twentie villages and townes, all burning at once round about one citie. O such a flame as that, would haue made our burning seeme none other than a playfull bonfire, for children to sport about. But blessed, blessed be the most high God, that such fires, so wittingly kindled by the malicious hands of mortall enemies, haue not wasted and consumed Towne and Country and all, that neither should bee able to releue other. Reioyce therefore all of you, that haue not felt that seuerity whereof your neighbours and friends haue tasted, because the Lord hath pleased to restraine the furie of the fire, and not suffer it to seize on your goods and houses: and you that haue sustained much dammage your selues, yet shew your selues feeling members, and reioyce with them that reioyce. Be glad that thou hast scaped what others haue felt; be glad that others haue scaped that thou hast felt: let thy freedome seeme to thee greater, because others went not free, and blesse the Lord the more for it. Let thy misery seeme to thee the lesse, because others haue not endured the like misery; and blesse thou the Lord as much for their freedome, as thou bemoanest thine owne damage: out of freedome and out of miserie both, wee must all picke matter of thanksgiuing; neither



neither should any affliction euer befall vs, but that we ought to take notice that God doth shew therein more mercie than rigour, more gentlenesse than sharpenesse. But aboue all, my brethren, I congratulate with them amongst you, that haue begun to lay the foundation of an edifice of bountie, for their releefe that are now forced to want releefe, and haue brought it to me, as it were, the first fruits of bountie and compassion; whom I will not so farre defraud of their iust praise, but that I will name them vnto you in the same order that they made themselues knowne to me, and not in the order of their places in other respects.

The first I will not name, because he is neere vnto my selfe, the fountaine from whence I haue issued, who ( besides that which his owne hands haue largely distributed ) did put into mine hands also, yesterday morning, the summe of twenty shillings, to distribute to the poorer sort, that were extremely comfortlesse.

The second was an old acquaintance, schoole-fellow, fellow pupill, chamber-fellow of mine, Mr. Ioseph Palmer by name, a long Student, and skilfull Practitioner in the necessarie Science of Physicke, who sent me the same day ten shillings, to be in like manner bestowed.

The third was a worthy and well-disposed Knight, that hath lately taken an habitation amongst vs, and liueth to bee an ornament to the noble profession of Armes, Sir Thomas Dutton of Wickham, in this Parish, who gaue me with his owne hands twenty shillings for the same present vse, withall earnestly exhorting mee to stirre up the liberality of the Country, at this present meeting.

Lastly, the right Worshipfull Sir William Cob of Adderbury, Knight, with the reuerend Master Oldis Minister of the same Towne, and the Worshipfull Master William Danuers, came home to mee yesterday, and brought with them that which was better than money, a declaration of their pittifull respect of our losses, requesting me to perswade the Magistrates, that they should take some speedy course for the supplying of the present great necessity of the poorer sort, promising themselues to shew their louing respect to the Towne, and tender compassion to the poore.

With those particulars which I know, and all others which I know not, that haue declared the like compassion and bounty, I congratulate the goodnesse of God to them, and in them. Blessed bee the mercifull, blessed be they that consider wisely of the poore, blessed be those that will lend freely to God,

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when he comes a borrowing in his needy seruants and children. Blessed be those that shew themselves liuing members of the same body, by commiserating and releeuing the miseries of the miserable : and blessed be God for all, who giueth all to all, and hath taken but some from some, and hath giuen to others an heart to affoord releefe to them from whom he hath taken almost all.

And now (brethren) let me beseech and exhort you all to follow the good examples of those that haue gone before you in the practise of those most excellent graces of mercy and liberalitie. Now is a time when we must put you in mind of, and you must carefully follow the charitable counsell of Iohn the Baptist to his attentive hearers ; let him that hath two coats, giue one to him that hath none ; and let him that hath food, doe likewise. For this end hath the Lord spared you, that you should learne not to be sparing to your brethren. Put your selues to voluntary charges in workes of mercy, seeing the Lord hath forborne to put you to this necessary losse which others haue suffered. Giue something to them from whom God hath taken, because it hath pleased him not to take from you that which hee had formerly giuen. Bee good Stewards of that which God hath left in your custody, that he may not declare his anger

ger against you, for your being niggardly of that which hee vouchsafed to leaue with you, that it might be an instrument of bounty. Now forget not to distribute and communicate, and to offer those sacrifices wherewith the Lord is pleased to testifie himselfe well pleased. Now let your abundance supply their wants, whom God hath therefore called to want, that hee might giue you an occasion of declaring the abundance of your charitie, in commiserating and releeuing their want of necessaries. No cost is more religiously, more vertuously, more thriftily bestowed, than that which is laid up in heauen, though it be laid out on earth. Bountifull and mercifull actions are the best bargaines, and the best purchases. No fire shall be able to consume those riches, wherewith a man doth enrich himselfe by succouring those that are distressed. This is a good and a sure foundation, laid up against the time to come. Shew your thankfulnessse to God by your liberalitie to his people: let almes-deeds bee your thanke-offerings, that God may still preserue your substance for new thanke-offerings. There is no surer way to keepe your selues from euer wanting, than by taking care that others want not, which but for your liberalitie must needs bee pressed and pinched with wants. It is a more blessed thing to giue



than to receiue, as Christ himselfe hath told vs :  
Giue willingly, giue speedily, giue plentifully, that  
the Lord may make you alwayes giuers rather than  
receiuers.

But I beseech you ( brethren ) let there be none,  
no not one amongst you, that out of a malicious de-  
sire to scurge pietie, so nicke-named, vpon our  
sides, shall mocke at Puritanisme, vpon occasion of  
this hand of God which hee hath stretched out a-  
gainst vs, whom the world hath pleased, but falsely,  
to terme Puritans. Or if any man will needs take  
oecasion to laugh at his brethren, whom his father  
sees good to correct before his eyes, we cannot but be  
assured that such petulancy and wantonnesse shall  
much displease that louing Father, which vseth  
his rods to warne one in anothers sufferings : and  
leauing him to be iudged by God, that can take his  
times of fit corrections for all his sonnes and daugh-  
ters, we will pittie his ignorant follie that doth so  
misse-interpret the Lords seueritie, comforting our  
selues with the Apostles saying, that hath told vs,  
how ludgement begins at the house of God, and  
that the father correcteth euery sonne whom  
he receiueth.

And so much ( well-beloued Brethren ) thought  
I fit to speake vnto you from my selfe, and in mine

owne name. Now hauing finished mine owne errand, I come to speake vnto you as Christs Ambassadour, in his name, and in his words, as himselfe did utter them in S. Iohns Gospell, saying,

IOHN 5. VER. 14.

*Sinne no more, lest a worse thing come vnto thee.*

**H**is sentence was spoken by our blessed Sayiour himselfe to a man whom himselfe had a little before, miraculously cured of a long and lingering sickness. It is a plaine sentence, that the weakest capacitie may conceiue it. A short sentence, that the feeblest memory may retaine it. It is very needfull, because it declareth a most behouefull dutie, and very terrible, because it threatens a very fearefull punishment: You cannot but see it diuiding it selfe into two portions. A plaine commandement, a sharpe threatning; the first, enioyning the right vse of former calamities; the second threatning, the neglect of such vse, with new and worse calamities. *Sinne no more*, that is the commandement, know it to practise it; *lest a worse thing fall vpon thee*; that is the threatning, know it and auoid it: The former saying may perhaps seeme strange, for who can attaine to such perfection, of *sinning no more*? When the Scripture telleth vs, that in many things we sin all, and that no man liueth and sinneth not: The latter saying may perhaps seeme impossible, for who can imagine a worse miserie, then eight and thirty yeares sickness? But if we consider the infinitnesse of Gods Iustice, we shall easily perceiue, that it is easie to him to lay a worse crosse, than any that befell formerly,

vpon him that will not profit by that which he hath felt already; for sure the Lord hath as much power, as man hath sin, and can as quickly make the weight of punishment heauier as man can make the weight of sin heauier. And if we consider the infinitnesse of Gods grace in Christ, accepting the will for the deed, and working the will and the deed; we shall easily see the meaning of Christ in bidding him *sinne no more*. Know then, that these words are to be vnderstood euangelically, in that the Lord will reckon him to haue sinned the more, that doth stedfastly purpose, and constantly labour to *sinne no more*. To forsake at least the vsuall practise of grosse sins, and the willing allowance of all, euen the least knowne sins; this is in the Gospell phrase to *sin no more*, and this is both possible, and also easie to him that is begotten from aboue. In these words then, you haue two points to note; A duty, and the danger, if we neglect the duty: Of the first at this time, at another time of the later.

Learne therefore I pray you, from the mouth of our blessed Sauour, that one speciall vse of our afflictions is our reformation. His chastisements must reclaime vs from our euill wayes; and though before wee were afflicted, we went astray, yet afterwards, we must cease to sinne any more, and learne his righteous iudgements; *Goe, and sin no more*. This is the fruit that the Lord doth looke for, from his corrections. This is that, which *Isay* the Prophet doth teach vs also, saying Chap. 27. ver. 9. *by this shall the iniquity of Iacob be purged*, and this is all fruit to take away this sinne; why doth the Goldsmith cast his gold into the furnace, but that it may come out more pure from drosse? And so doth the Lord try vs in the furnace of aduersity, that the drosse of our finnes



sinnes may be purged from vs. And that we should be reformed by crosses it appeareth, because the Lord complaineth for want of this effect, *Isay 1.5.* saying, *why should you be smitten any more? yee will reuolt more and more:* as if he had said, that it is in vaine to correct a people, that will not be amended by corrections. And by the Prophet *Amos*, Chap.4.ver.8. the Lord doth fīue times together reprove the people, that notwithstanding the diuers calamities wherewith he had declared his displeasure against them for their sins, *yet ye haue not returned vnto me, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Now there is no true conuersion without amendment. If we cast not away our transgressions, we cannot be counted true conuerts; Seeing then, the not conuerting to God by meanes of chastisements, is greatly condemned, and amendment is a chiefe part of turning; we must needs confesse that the Lord requireth that this conuersion and amendment should follow from his stripes. No man will question this truth. The plainnesse of it shall spare vs a labour of further proofes.

Two principall reasons may perswade vs to it: First, sin is the cause of all the miserie we feelee, miserie therefore should induce vs to forsake sinne. For it is a brutish folly to complaine of any euill, and not obserue the cause that deserueth the same, to remoue it. Seeing the Lord is the Iudge and Ruler of all the world, and that nothing doth befall the sons of men, but by his appointment, (as our Christian Religion commandeth vs to beleeue, which teacheth the doctrine of Gods speciall prouidence) either we must impute vniustice and cruelty to God, as if he were angry for nothing, & delighted in the Creatures unhappinesse (which blasphemy nature it selfe abhorreth, as most repugnant to all right reason; for  
how

how should that be found in God? the fountaine of all goodnesse, which maketh the men in whom it is found, to all lose the honour of goodnesse) or else wee must confesse, that our wickednesse is the roote of all our wretchednesse; and that therefore wee are smitten by God, because we haue transgressed the Law of God, and hence also must conclud (euen out of loue to our owne welfarre, as well as out of duty to our maker) that we will surely cast from vs those things, which wee finde in experience to be mischieuous vnto vs. What childe is there who being whipped, doth not cry out I will doe no more, I will doe no more? What malefactor will not presently promise to leaue the practise of those crimes, that procure his bands and imprisonment? We are void of that vnderstanding which is to be found in very infants, and in the worst of men, if wee make not the like conclusions, from the stripes and punishments which our heavenly father, and the chiefe ruler of his whole world, doth inflict vpon vs. Tell me then, is not God the author of thine afflictions, whatsoever the secondary cause be? either confesse this, or professe thy selfe an heathen, an Epicure; and if this be true, either when thou feelest the prints and scars of his displeasure against thy sinnes, thou must resolute to leaue thy sinnes, or else confesse thy selfe a foole, a beast, that hath no regard of his own happinesse and comfort.

Again, this is the sole way of becomming great gainers by our miseries, to reforme our liues, and cast away our sins. And who would not doe that worke (though painfully) that shall cause afflictions to end in comfort? not alone procuring the remoucall of the crosse, but an increase of blessings also? If when our heavenly father chastiseth vs, we fling away our sins, he will not alone  
cast

cast away his rods, and cease smiting, but will also be-  
 thinke himsele of many benefits, whereby to declare  
 that his anger is turned into fauour. So wel is God plea-  
 sed with beholding the dutifulnesse of his seruants, in  
 stooping to his hand, & redressing what hath prouoked  
 him, that he will be so much more bountifull and gra-  
 cious to them, by how much hee hath more afflicted  
 them before, and so it shall be better with them, than if  
 they had not beene smitten at all: where is our wis-  
 dome? where is loue to our selues? where is our natu-  
 rall desire of happinesse? if we take not so good an op-  
 portunity, to turne our woe into weale, our sorrow into  
 ioy, our sorest calamity into greatest consolation? If we  
 doubt of this effect of an holy reformation, the Lord  
 hath put vs out of all doubt, by causing it to bee, both  
 promised & performed vnto *Iob*, and in him to all that  
 are afflicted, *Iob* 11. 14. verse. *Zopher* telleth *Iob*, that  
 which God himsele did make good at last, *If iniquity be  
 in thine hand, put it farre away, & let not wickednesse dwell  
 in thy tabernacles.* Loe what an afflicted man must doe,  
 his care must be to purge his hand and his house of all  
 manner of wickednesse and sin. This if he will doe, heare  
 how the Lord will reward his amendment. His estate  
 shall be amended as much as his soule, and more, and  
 God will make misery to fly as farre from him, as hee  
 hath chased iniquity, for then saith he, *thou shalt lift vp  
 thy face without spot, yea thou shalt be stedfast and not feare,*  
 meaning, I take it, thou shalt enioy the comfortable assu-  
 rance of the remission of thy sins, and shalt rest assuredly  
 and fearlessly perswaded, that the staine thereof is quite  
 done away before the Lord. A man shall hold vp his  
 head with comfort before his maker, & with confident  
 boldnesse appeare without spot and blot before him, if



his afflictions for sinne do bring forth reformation, And for his outward state he addeth, *thou shalt forget thy misery.* His afflictions shall not alone have an end, but that so, as he shall be quite freed from all the trouble of them, there shall be no such remainder of them, as to make him once thinke of them againe, or if he do remember them, he saith, *thou shalt remember them as waters that are past,* which cause the meddowes to bee more fat and fertile, then they would haue beene: looke what those flouds be to the meddowes, wherewith they seeme to be little lesse than drowned all the winter (euen causes of their being more richly clad, with grasse and flowers in the spring) that shall afflictions proue, to them that are made to forsake their sins by their afflictions, means of helping them to much more comfort and prosperitie; and this comfort shall be very great and very lasting too, and still growing and increasing more and more, *thine age* (saith he) *shall be clearer then the noone day, thou shalt shine forth and be as the morning.* The comfort of a sinner reformed by corrections, shall be plentifull and excellent as the brightnes of the noontide Sun, and withall constant durable and on the growing hand, as the light of the morning. If these be promises of God which cannot be made in vaine, if they be of an vndoubted truth, and shall be infallibly performed, is he not more stupid and senselesse than a dead stone? that will not be moued by them, to improve his chastisements, for the remouing of his sins. Do not all men loue prosperitie and comfort, wish it for themselves and for their friends, pray for, reioyce in, bestow all their labour to get comfort? and why should we not follow Gods directions, rather than our owne, and learne from him the path that leads to prosperity? seeing we confesse him to be maker and giuer of prosperity.

Enough

Enough I hope to proue this duty and to perswade it. Now for you better direction in the practise of it, I will stand a while to shew you two needful points. First, what sins a man must amend by chastisements. Secondly, by what meanes a man must make his affliction an helpe to his amendment of these sins. For the first of these. First in generall, all sins must be forsaken without exception, and therefore doth our Saviour deliuer the precept here in these generall termes, *sin no more*, neither in one thing, nor in another. And so doth the Prophet call vpon Israel saying, cast away all your transgressions. All sin is hatefull to God, all sinne is hurtfull to man. Every sin is euill in Gods sight, euery sin is threatned with the curse, euery sin deserueth the curse, euery sin grieueth the spirit, euery sin is forbidden by the Law, euery sin was punished in *Christ*, and vnlesse we reforme euery sin, we do not indeed and in truth reforme any sinne. Looke therefore that your reformation bee generall and vniuersall, without any limitation or exception; for you haue to deale with God, that is a God of pure eyes, and can abide no iniquitie, no not any of any kind, or any degree. He that spake one commandement, spake all, and he that obeyeth one cōmandement, must and will in some good measure obey all. For if any man shall keepe the whole law besides, and yet allow himselfe in the breach of any one commandement of the law, hee shall bee counted a transgressor of all; and all his other obedience, because it is hollow, false, and hypocriticall, shall be reiected and disallowed by God. More particularly, euery man must amend his owne sins, the finnes of his person, nature, place, condition, the most beloued of all his sins, those that are most pleasant, most profitable, most creditable to him, those that he hath most will

to commit, and is most vnwilling to forsake. Those that stick fastest vnto him, and flatter him with most hope of profit, delight, credit. So saith the Prophet, *let the wicked man forsake his wickednes, & the vnrighteous man his own imaginations*, and another Prophet saith, *cast away all your transgressions whereby you haue transgressed*. So our Sauour calleth vs to the cutting of the hand & foot, and pulling out the eye, and casting them away. There are some sins that are as deare to euery man, as the principall members of his bodie, and the most needfull and vsfull of all his senses. These, these must be mortified, forsaken, abandoned. If our principall care be not to relinquish these principall transgressions, our partiall and seeming care in reforming other euils, shall be nothing at all regarded. Consider then each of you, what is his most precious and most esteemed corruption, what he is most loth to forgoe, what seemeth most hard, most difficult, most impossible for him to cast away, and let him bestow his chiefe paines here where hee findeth most hardnesse. But most chiefly aboue all, afflictions should worke vs to the leauing of those offences, which the Lord in afflicting, doth most chiefly intend and aime at: as the child must be most carefull to reforme that fault, for which his father doth particularly chastise him: we must giue our selues diligently to marke what is the offence or offences, which when God layeth his rod vpon vs, he doth most dislike in vs, and would haue vs most willing to glorifie him by amending, For though the Lord do correct for sin in general, yet for the most part, there are some speciall disorders which doe most prouoke him, and which he doth in speciall call vs to reforme by his stripes. Now therefore as concerning the present calamity which hath light vpon you: ler mee  
strive



strive to be helpfull vnto you, in declaring what the faults be, which the Lord doth most shew himself angry against, and to the leauing whereof, he doth most particularly call you, by his heauie stroke of his most righteous, and withall most gracious hand. But how shall we attain to the knowledge of Gods intention in this matter? Surely my brethren, by considering the medicine, which a wise Physitian doth minister, it is easie to know the disease or diseases w<sup>ch</sup> he seeketh to cure. Let me read the prescript of a skilfull Artift, and know those ingredients whereof his potion is compounded, & I may soone affirme what be those humours, which he would haue purged away. For either like things are healed with like, or else contrary with contrary. In like manner, if we do discreetly consider the chastisements of God, wee shall easily perceiue his meaning, and informe our selues of the sins which he seeketh to reforme. I pray you therefore let vs take a view of our affliction, and looke chiefly to these foure things: the time when the Lord afflicted, the place where our sorrow began, the instruments by which we suffered, and the things in which; and if we do with any mediocritie of wisdom, ponder on these particulars, wee shall not chuse but know the Lords minde in this matter, and see our owne duty, as concerning the speciall sins, which we must specially set against. First, then the time which the Lord did chuse for our humbling, was in generall the Lords day, that seuenth after six of labour, which it seemed good to him for our spirituall benefit, to consecrate wholly to his owne service, and our attending the worke of getting holinesse: what can we collect hence, but that we are punished by the restlesnesse of this Sabbath, for our not resting an holy rest many other Sabbaths? How often hath the

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Lord vouchsafed vs liberty and freedome to giue his owne day to him and to our owne soules? And then we, out of our prophannesse, and earthlinesse, tooke no care to sanctifie it, but either loytered out the day in idlenesse, or wasted it in our own businesse, or in our own pastimes. Now therefore he would not giue vs leaue to rest, or to bestow our selues in duties of holinesse, but forced vs by necessity to spend the day and night too, in a most toilsome and most vncomfortable labour. Oh how iust is it that they which will not rest from worldly or voluptuous labours on Gods resting day, should be compelled to toyle and moyle like horses in such an vnhappy businesse? I pray you, go on to thinke more particularly at what time this crosse brake forth amongst vs; not on the Lords day alone, but when we were all assembled in his House, to performe his publike worship, then did he please to interrupt vs by so fearefull an accident. Why so? But to warne vs of our great negligence of these his publique seruices: How many of vs as very slacke in comming to the Congregation of God, when we haue aboudant leasure? And this day, loe the Lord reiected vs, would not giue vs time and opportunity, to meet againe in his House, but hurried vs together in the streets, and drew euery man home to his owne house to saue it from the flames? Could we be more manifestly smitten for neglecting to come to Gods House, when we might haue done it, then by his not suffering vs to come thither now, when we would haue beene glad to haue had leasure to come thither? But the cry of fire, fire came flying in at the Church doores euen in that instant, when wee had newly begun to celebrate the Lords supper; when some had receiued that holy Sacrament, and the greater number were to receiue, then did God pull vs from his table,

table, and thrust vs out of his house by force, then was I compelled to request all of you ( that had strength and abilitie to do seruice there ) to make all haste to the place of danger, and the rest ( that could haue but troubled others with their presense and outcries ) to stay still at Church. Now sure the Lord in pulling this spirituall food euen out of our mouths, when he had shewed it to all, and giuen it to some, did euen put vs in minde of our most carelesse and vnprepared comming vnto it, without regard to lament our sins before, or reforme them after. How many of you are bold to abuse this blessed ordinance, comming often to it, and going still from it, as vnreformed in life as before, because you come to it without any fit preparation. Did not God speak to sitch and tell them, by thus driuing them from his board, that he counts them very vnwelcome guests at his table? So haue we considered the time of this crosse. Think of the place also, where did the burning begin? At a kilne, I say a kilne, a malt forge, the proper instrument of making that thing, which is the next and immediate worker of drunkenesse, that huge sin, that fertile broody big-bellied sin, which is ( as they say of the first matter ) apt to take the formes of all sins, which by burying reason, and choaking conscience, and setting loose all passions, doth turne a man into a beast, or rather into a Deuill, which makes a man for the time, a meere Atheist, a very deny-er of God, and thrusts out of his breast all remembrance, all feare, all loue of him, which disables him for all diuine seruices, and makes that he must needs either neglect or abuse them: which fills his mouth with blasphemous oaths and execrations: which will make him raile on the Magistrate, strike his owne father, deflowre his owne daughter, spend his goods lauishly, proclaime all  
his

his vices, & follow all his lusts. This transcendent sin the destroyer of grace, reason, nature, strength state, name, all. This sin God did surely point at, and punish: and calleth vpon all to forsake, hate, oppose this sinne.

The fire began in a kilne, it consumed twenty kilnes, it left no kilne standing that was within his walke, it leaped from one side of the street to the other, to fetch in kilnes, it spared none it came neere, it spoiled more malt, than of any other goods of one kinde (so farre as I can learne) Say what you thinke, brethren, Is it not plaine that the Lord doth admonish you of that fault (whereof the liquor of malt is the most common instrument) when he bare so hard a hand against kilnes and against malt.

Looke a little further, I pray you, to the principall instruments of this desolation: The fire, a furious Element of it selfe (yet resistible enough, if store of helpe be present, whereof you did not want any, euen at the very first) this fire did borrow strength and swiftnesse from the rough and boisterous winds, vpon the tempestuous wings whereof, it came riding, as it were in triumph, through your streets, disdainning all resistance, till it had passed from end to end of your towne, and could not be restrained. Now be not these two creatures of very common vse? What day is it wherein we haue not necessary vse of fire? what weeke wherein some such carelesnesse as produced this calamity, is not to be found amongst you? And what yeare is it? What quarter? almost what moneth? in which the wind doth not, for one or other day speake louder, and buffell somewhat more roughly than ordinary? Yet hath it neuer before falne out in any of our dayes, that these two Elements, fire and ayre (for no doubt winde is well termed an aire moued, whatsoever be the mouing cause of that mouing) should lay  
their



their strengths together to hurt you? Now when God that doth so constantly chaine vp these hurtfull and violent creatures, doth please for once so to pull off his bands, and let them run loose as it were, and when being so broken loose, they doe so much mischief and make so great hauocke, What is this but a very vpbraiding vs with our notable vnthankfulnesse, for that mightie preservation of God, by which he doth vsually keepe vs from the like dangers; and not so alone, but maketh these creatures very seruiceable to vs, which if he please to let the bridle slip a little, are able to ruinate our states in a moment. How often haue you come to Church in peace, and gone home in peace, and in peace returned thither againe, and againe homeward without any noyse of fire or feare of losse? How often haue the blustering stormes, done nothing else but whistled you asleepe the faster, all night long? And alas how little did you consider of this benefit of preservation from fire and tempest? how seldome haue you giuen the Lord any particular thanks, for taking order with these his creatures, that they should not wrong you? Doubtlesse for this as one cause hath he licensed them now to fight against you, that you might take notice of your dulnesse and ingratitude, which considered not, nor acknowledged the greatnesse of your debt for former safekeeping.

But now at length wee are come to thinke of the subiect of this crosse, wherein hath the Lord smitten vs? In our houses and in our goods, in the riches and substance of this present life, insomuch that diuers of you haue nothing left, many haue but little left, and a great number haue far lesse left then you had: without all question the Lord intends hereby to warne you of those sins and disorders, which are busied about this

paultry riches of the world wherein he saw it fit to visit you. Goe to then, and let vs informe you of the principall faults that are committed about riches. They are common to all, and particular, to the wealthier sort, and to the poorer. For the first, there are some sinnes about riches, which are common to all, the chiefe of them are three, to wit, mis-getting, mis-keeping, mis-spending. Misgetting by the vse of any lawlesse meanes, or the immoderate vse of any lawfull: Mis-keeping from God and man, chiefly from the poore, and from the publike: Mis-spending, either at all in sinfull things, or excesssiuely in good things. There are some more particular euills, which are found in richer men, as pride of it, confidence in it, vnsatiablenesse with it, and in the poorer sort, enueying them that haue more, grumbling that themselves haue so little. All and each of them the Lord doth shew himselfe offended at, and would consume as drosse by this fire: For as a good father keepes many faults together on the score, as it were, and reckons for all at one beating, so doth the Lord with his children, else alas he should be alwaies fighting, because we are alwayes offending. Let me speake a little more at large of these euils. For euill getting of goods first, hath not the Lord threatned that fire shall consume the houses of bribes? meaning all the substance which is vniustly attained, and all the rest in the house, though gotten iustly, together with the place within which they are both laid vp, euen altogether for company? and when he made so many of your houses to blaze at once, did he not as it were chide you (so many as be guilty thereof) for your vnequall and vniust dealing? as if he had said, Ah foolish man or woman, wouldst thou hazard a soule, by lying, deceit, oppression, bribery, false weights, false mea-

measures, or any like iniquity, to get a little pelfe together, which now thou seest, the wind is able to blow from thee, in the space of a few houres? VVill you forfeit a Kingdome, an euerlasting Kingdome, by sinning against God, against his Word, against your consciences, to haue that to you wrongfully, which you see now you cannot keepe with all your paines? now learne to know the ficklenesse of riches, so well as that thou maist be resolute hereafter, I will neuer wound my soule to fill my purse or house, all the world cannot heale that wound for all ages: these gaines, one whiffe of wind, and flake of fire can turne into rubbish. Againe, too much labouring for riches is an euill getting of riches, euen in the most lawfull course of life. For *Salomon* hath commanded saying, *labour not to be rich*, that is, make not the getting of riches the scope and end of thy labour, which he surely doth that taketh excessiue paines to attaine them. And he subioynes this reason to his precept, for riches taketh her selfe to her wings, and flyeth away like an Eagle. Now then that God hath made you to see your riches euen flying away from you on the wings of a windy flame, doth he not sensibly punish you, for such immoderate labouring, and call you to more moderation? If then any man haue so farre giuen ouer himselfe to the seeking of earthly things, by the most lawfull courses that can be, as to thrust out quite, or else to thrust vp in a narrow corner these exercises that tend to get better things, than wealth, euen the true riches of the soule, hee must say to himselfe, and within himselfe, Alas, how foolish haue I beene, to toyle my selfe in following after that, which when I haue attained, I cannot possibly keepe it safely, but may lose it all, or the



most part of it, so suddenly, so irrecoverably? And must conclude with himselfe, that he will certainly be more temperate hereafter, and seeke this vncertaine riches, with farre lesse vehemency of paines, than the things that are of a far more durable nature. But though a man get not amisse, yet if he keepe and saue inordinately, he is also found guiltie of a fault about wealth. And sometimes the sonnes of men doe hold and keepe euen from the liuing God himselfe when they loue their goods so, that they cannot finde in their hearts to giue vnto God euen that very portion which God hath challenged as his owne. For when our Sauour willet vs to giue vnto God that which is Gods, must it not follow of necessity that something is Gods? And if any thing be his, (in this particular manner) sure it is the tenth of our increase, or else nothing, for to none other portion hath he euer laid claime in any place: and for this, seeing God hath appointed still, holy actions to be done, and holy functions in which they must be done, and holy persons by whom they must be done in those functions: surely he must haue holy goods too, for the rewarding of those persons, maintaining those functions, and honouring and vpholding those actions. But in this matter how faulty are all you Tradesmen in generall, for which of you did euer make conscience to giue the Lord his owne in this measure? Wherefore, when you see the Lord to come, and take away from you euen by force of fire and tempest, a great quantitie at once, euen so much perhaps, and more, as the tenth of your increase, from yeere to yeere would haue amounted vnto; must you not needs take notice, that his meaning was to recover that by strong hand, which you would not yeeld, out of loue and duty? Surely, seeing our  
Lord

Lord Iesus Christ hath ordained that the Ministers of the Gospell should liue of the Gospell, euen so, as that the Ministers of the Tēple should liue of the Temple; you must either shew some new ordinance of his for this purpose, or else must yeeld that he hath ratified and continued the old still; and therefore must resolute to giue God his tenth freely hereafter, that you may not compell him to take such a violent course for the recouering of it out of your hands. But besides, that is kept from God which is kept from his poore, whose wants require releefe of them, whom hee hath made stewards of more abundance. For in promising to reward the liberall, he must needs tie himselfe to punish the niggardly in this kinde. Now how extremely pinching are men (yea godly men otherwise) in this expence? Yea and how are they wont to excuse themselves in such occasions, by saying they haue it not, they cannot spare it? Hath not the Lord confuted your vaine excuses actually, by taking away so much at once? And yet you must make a shift to liue of that that is left behind too. If a day or two past, some man had come vnto thee for releefe of a poore afflicted neighbour, wouldest thou haue giuen him the fift part of that which the fire hath consumed? Now the Lord in robbing thee of so much at once, doth vpbraid thee with thy too much vnwillingnesse to part with lesse, of thine owne accord, when himselfe did come to borrow. Say then with thy selfe, I will giue with a more bountifull hand, to supply the poore mans wants, that I may not force the Lord to send his vnexpected messengers, as it were to destraine vpon my goods, for default of due obedience to that Commandement, of giuing to six and to seuen; had it not beene better to

haue fed, clad, or releued a poore Christian with it, then to haue kept it for the burning flame? And yet further when the publike state of the towne or country doth require the cost of the members therof, if then they hang backe, and will not put themselues to due expences willingly, who doth not see that they saue more than enough? For could not an heathen say, that our country hath a great share in our selues, and in all that wee haue? Surely then for ouer-sauing in this case, the Lord might iustly punish you with this present stroke. Oh resolve therefore that God himselfe and his poore, and your country shall neuer find you pinching, giue him his tenth, giue the poore sufficient for their needs and your country enough for its needfull publique vses, else the Lord can quickly fulfill his threat, of making the too close-fisted sauer, to meet with wants. You haue lost many of you (and all stood in feare to loose) more than would haue abundantly sufficed for all these vses: bee not wanting to such vses any more, lest the Lord visit you againe with new and more losses, in this or some other as bad a fashion.

Lastly the mispending of goods is very offenseuue to God that lends them, for what master is not discontented, that his seruant doth lay out his substance against his good liking? And are you any other than Gods stewards, and Gods Baylieses? and can you thinke that God allowes you to spend in drinking, whooring, gaming, riot, and euill meetings, and lewd company? did he put riches into your hands to serue the Diuell and sinne? if your soules be guilty of such most sinfull lauishnesse, be sure that for these sins the Lord hath smitten thee, and be sure that hereafter thou make not the Diuell the keeper of thy purse, and opener of thy chest,  
let



let not Satan and lust haue the key of thy coffer and strings of thy purse in their hands to open them at their pleasure. The Lord will not alwayes suffer vnfaithfull stewards, to goe vnpunished in their vnfaithfulnesse, no not in this present life. And besides this, take notice that to affect curiositie and vaine glory, in the most lawfull and needfull expences, is wastfulnesse and prodigalitie; and yet how much doe many of you exceed in this kinde? so much you lay out in ouer plentious feasting, when you make feasts, in ouer-gorgious trimming of your bodies and houses, that as a barrell of beere, which hath a leake and runs out where it should not, will not hold out as it should, when it comes to be duly broached at the spigget; so you haue neither will nor power to lay out enough for mercifull vses because you cast away more than enough, in proud and vaine-glorious vses. Resolue therefore to be better husbands, and truer dispensers of Gods goods hereafter. Be richer in good workes than in good cloathes, and good household stuffe, and good fare, and good buildings: In these things equall your selues with them of the lower sort, that in better things you may be equall with them of the higher. Driue not God to cut you shorter because you abuse your goods to vanity.

These are common abuses, about earthly things in the richer and in the poorer. I come to the speciall. First, how often doe rich men wax proud of their wealth, and thinke themselues so much the better than their poorer neighbours, by how much they possesse more; crowing on the dunghill of wealth, and calling all, base and meane men, whose morsells be not so fat in the world as theirs. Oh how notably doth God confute those vaine fancies, in sending for his owne goods home

home againe by such sturdie and churlish seruants. as those, which will not regard the rich man more than the poore? Tell me now, art thou the better for that, that was only lent thee, and may be fetched home againe by the owner euery moment? Wilt thou bee good in thine owne eyes hereafter, for that which thou knowest not, how quickly the Lord may strip thee of with much affrightment? Be not, be not so securely foolish hereafter as to prize thy selfe the more for those things, which hang about thee so loosely, and whereof thou hast so slender hold, wherein so little right, that a coale of fire, and a puffe of wind, may take all from thee, before thou hast told two dayes more. If any thinke that his reuenues lie in lands, which fire cannot consume, I answer, water can drowne lands also, and God hath as much water as fire in his store-house, and this whole land of ours is so surrounded with waues, that if God but bid the winds be violent, they will as easily and quickly ouerrunne this whole kingdome, as the present fire hath done this towne in which we abide. If any say, hee feareth no such inundation, I answer, neither within this three dayes did we feare any such fire; but God hath a thousand wayes, to goe beyond the feares and hopes of vs weake-sighted mortals. Goe to then, be wise for the time to come, and pride not thy selfe in that, which may cease to be thine in a moment. I proceed. Do not rich men trust in their riches, though the Apostle hath intitled them *uncertaine riches*? When God doth make it appeare by experience, that they be most fickle, which by the testimony of his word, wee will not count to be such; is not this a plaine punishment of our confidence in them? And must we not by these blowes informe our selues so of this propertie, as to resolve hereafter, I will  
not

not trust in riches, that is to say, I will not build vpon a rotten quagmire? I know that almost all the world will cry not guilty of this fault, but it is because they doe not know the fault. They doe plainly practise it, though they flatly deny it. For what is it to trust in any thing, but to hold vp our hopes of attaining the good we desire, or escaping the euill we shunn, by the helpe and benefit of that thing? he that stayes his beleefe and hope vpon a thing, he trusts in it, let him say what hee will to the contrary. Now haue you not thus done with wealth? Diddest thou not promise thy selfe a weeke since to liue merrily and comfortably, and to escape hunger, cold, nakednesse, &c. because thou hadst a conuenient house, fit stuffe in it, and fit things to maintaine thee? And now tell me, what is become of these thine hopes? and this thy trust? when all thy goods are gone, and nothing is left but ashes. Oh see, see, that riches are very runnagates and fugitiues, that they be very lies and falsities, and that if they promise a man comfort in old age, or helpe in any time, against any misery, they doe but coulin him with shewes: For how can that helpe thee, which may runne from thee euery day and houre? Now learne to enioy wealth, so long as God doth giue it thee; but neuer to promise thy selfe comfort or benefit from it, which is to trust in it. It is a thing, as thine eyes haue told thee lately, more easily moueable, more easily loseable, than that it can make good such promises. There is yet one more disease of the soule about riches, the dropisie of insatiable and insatisfiable wishes for more, more. Men haue enlarged their hearts to the things below, as the graue it selfe, and learne of the Horleach to crie giue, giue. Those that began with a little, and are



raised to large estates, are no iot lesse greedily desirous of more, than they were at first, nay their hearts are so retched with their goods, because they lay them vp in their hearts, that still they are fitted to hold more, by how much more is put into them. Now the Lord by taking from you much of your substance, warned you to cut off much of your desires after more. Thou diddest thinke thy state too little, and desiredst an increase, God did thinke it too much, and saw fit to decrease it, without doubt he is wiser than thy selfe: now learne to diminish thy longing after wealth, as much ~~and more,~~ than he hath diminished thy wealth. And ~~it is~~ a more happy thing to lose riches, if withall wee lose that eager desire of them, which their presence did increase, than still to possesse them, and still to be so eager after more; learne to know when you haue enough, because the Lord hath made it appeare, that his minde was contrary to your desires, and that he accounted it too much, which you esteemed not enough.

Two great disorders more of this kinde there remaine, more proper to the meaner sort of people; Enuying and murmuring. Those to whom the Lord sees fit to shew himselfe somewhat sparing, are as much tormented many times with other mens abundance, as with their owne penury; neither is it so grievous to them, that themselues haue so scant a portion, as that the portion of others is more plentiful. Their eye ~~is~~ euill, because Gods eye is good. They fret that others enioy the benefits which themselues haue not and doe little lesse than hate and maligne a rich man only because he is rich. A vice of any other worthy to be lamented and abhorred, as being at once wrong-  
full

all to God, the free disposer of his owne gifts, to a mans selfe the beholder, and others the receivers of the same; for either God is wise enough to finde the fittest objects of his bounty, or he is not. Thou darest not affirme the latter in words, for feare of making thy selfe a blasphemers. Why dost thou then affirme it in deeds, by taking offence at his diuision of his owne substance? for, no doubt, he that grieueth at anothers action, blames him at least of indiscretion. And for thy selfe, what a miserable folly is it, to draw gaule out of hony, and to gather misery from anothers comfort? How vnnaturall a part were it in the naked hand to grudge the foot a good shooe? and canst thou shew more vncharitablenesse in any thing, than in being vexed at thy brothers welfare? Wherefore, let him whose heart hath beene guilty of repining at anothers plenty, obserue, that God in taking away what he had before, corrects his want of being satisfied in the former distribution, and hath made his little, lesse, to punish his causelesse grieve and anger at anothers store. But I will conclude with murmuring, a vice no lesse frequent than the former in men of meane estates. All their complaint is that they haue nothing, like to vngratefull beggers, that deny they had any almes where they had not so large an almes as they desired. Such were diuers of you, you had such poore houses, such cold houses, you had nothing to hang vpon you; I say all your words tended to diminish the gifts that God had giuen: These were lying and false complaints and mutterings, and now the Lord doth call you to sorrow for them, and amendment of them, by verifying them whether you will or not. How glad wouldest thou bee now, if that house were standing, or those

goods remaining, which thou diddest often abuse with the name of nothing. Beware of muttering causelessely, that God may not be angry to heare those mutterings, and make you proue them true, to your further smart. Thus my beloved brethren, I haue shewed you what offences they be, the reformation of which the Lord doth expect: Let me adde one thing more which the consideration of the instrument of your misery doth lead vs vnto. In Scripture we reade, that God hath appeared in fire and tempest, then, when hee would strike a feare of himselfe into the hearts of men, and make them tremble and quake before him. Thus in the giuing of the Law he clad himselfe with a consuming flame; and in the Psalme, there went a smoake out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth consumed. And in another Psalme, clouds and darkenesse are round about him, and a fire goeth before him. So did he shew himselfe to *Iob* in a tempest and whirle-wind, and to *Elijah* in a mighty wind and fire. These things are terrible to man, and make the stoutest heart to quake. The Lord in causing his creatures to shew themselves so terrible, would checke vs for that want of feare of his owne greatnesse, which is found in vs; O the feare of God is not before our eyes. Who is so much afraid to offend God, as he is of the fury of the flaming fire? What crying, what running away from the fire, what conueighing of your goods from out of his reach? Is fire so fearefull, one of Gods host, and will not you learne to feare before the consuming fire of his wrath? Mend, I pray, that carelesse contempt of God, which is the cause of most other sinnes, and tremble now before him, one or two of whose creatures you see to bee so irresistible. How canst thou stand against



gainst God, how darest thou rush vpon his wrath, that didst make such haste to runne away from wind, and sinoake, and flame?

These be the chiefe faults, which you must endeavour to redresse by meanes of this visitation.

I goe forward to shew you by what meanes you may cause this crosse to further your amendment of these and other faults. To this end foure things are necessary. First you must looke vp to God in this misery, and acknowledge his hand in it, and withdraw your eyes, from the secondary cause or occasion; For it is the Lord that sendeth both euill and good, both prosperous and aduerse things to particular persons, and to whole townes and countries. Carelesnesse and negligence of any person, could not haue produced so lamentable a losse, if Gods prouidence had not so disposed, that such negligence should haue fallen out, at such a time, in such a rough and violent wind, sitting in such a point as to driue it vpon you, not from you. The Lord that knew the winds would then bee very boisterous and violent, and that they would sit fitly to carrie the flames from house to house, euen till they had passed thorow all the places which he saw fit to strike, he I say, he by his good prouidence, did order things so that the heedlesnesse of some or other should then giue occasion, to the breaking out of the fire, when the frosty wind had made each thing, as drie almost as tinder to receiue fire, and when the present tempest was readie to scatter and disperse the fire. Say thou to thy selfe, that hast lost thy goods, or house, or both; The God of heauen he rules all things, he disposeth of all euents, none so great, none so little, but it is subiect to his prouidence; casuall things, to him are not casuall

uncertaine things, to him are not uncertaine. Fire, water, aire, earth, wind, tempest, all things, are his creatures, none of them can stirre without his power and knowledge. The sinnes of men, their carelesse, their wilfulnesse, their actions of all sorts, are all vnder his eye, all vnder his decree; It is he that doth moderate every particular euent, neither is chauce or happe any thing but an idle word, vnlesse wee meane by it an act of Gods prouidence most certainly governing those things that to men are uncertaine. I will not therefore trouble my selfe with inquiring of or chafing against the person or persons, by whose faultinesse this unruly seruant was made a Master: but I will looke onely to God, and say with *Iob, hee hath giuen, and he hath taken*. The fixing of the words or thoughts too much vpon the secundarie cause of any crosse, hinders the spirituall working of it for the healing of the soule; but the looking vp to God, and calling our thoughts to his all ruling hand, doth make the soule capable of being reformed by crosses. This doe in the first place. And secondly, Take notice of your sinnes as the causes that haue prouoked God, and incensed him the principall worker, and so procured this aduersitie. Speake vnto your soules often, and that not in a few formall and generall words, but effectually and particularly, saying; It is sinne, and onely sinne, that maketh the Creator to send misery vpon the creatures. Hee doth no more desire our pouerty, than our death, but that we, by transgressing his Law, doe compell his iustice to shew it selfe, as it were in defence of his authoritie. A iust Prince must punish vndutifull subiects, vnlesse hee would forfeit the honour of Iustice. Because wee haue sinned in  
breaking

breaking Gods Sabbath, he hath interrupted vs, in the rest of his Sabbath, with so hideous an interruption; because wee haue sinned in abusing his Sacrament, he hath turned vs from his Sacrament, in so vncomfortable a fashion. In a word, say to thy selfe, I haue sinned in murmuring that I had so little, or wishing that I had more. I haue sometimes spent, sometimes gotten, sometimes kept, vnlawfully and against my duty. Some of this that I haue lost, was gotten by such courses as I cannot iustifie, some saued when God did call for it, and therefore hee hath now in this manner depriued me of it. O how vile a thing is sinne, which forfeiteth the goods as well as the soule, and pulleth vpon me so sore punishments in this life, besides those of the other world. Cause your soules, by frequent and earnest affirming it vnto them, to be assuredly perswaded, that these sinnes which I haue named, are the true causes of your present losse, and the losse you suffer will cause you to hate sinne, and hatred will bring forth amendment. We say that with our tongues many times, when wee doe not beleue with our hearts, but hee that can make his heart fully to assent to this truth, my sinnes in generall, and by name such and such sins are the things for which I am thus smitten, shall not choose but loath his sinnes when he labours vnder the burthen of their euill effects. But thirdly, you must strue to make your griefes spirituall, as in part I did exhort you at the beginning. A man may kill himselfe with crying and weeping for his smart or wants, and yet his sinnes be neuer a whit the more killed; but if when any affliction befalleth himselfe, and hee findes his sorrowes stirring within him, hee will then set his sorrowes against his sinnes, that sorrow will surely subdue



subdue the power of sinne. Say to your selues, I cannot but sigh and grieue, and mourne, to see so great and so lamentable an alteration. I had an house yesterday, or the other day, now I am houselesse. I had a bed to lye vpon, but now it is burnt. I had goods to serue my turne, and now they be gone into smoake, my state is greatly weakned, if not vtterly vndone, I cannot but be sad and afflicted in heart for this. But ah those sins which haue opened the treasury of Gods Iustice, and made him vse those weapons to fight against me, doe deserue and will procure infinite more misery. Some is lost now, all must be lost surely, with body and soule, and all, yea body and soule, and all, must be burned, and yet remaine for euer burning in those flames that shall not begin one day, and burne violently for another, and then slacke againe in the third; but shall continue for euer burning with vnspeakeable rage and torment. Doth the losse of my goods pinch me? what shall the losse of heauen doe? was fire, so terrible when it seized alone vpon mine house? what shall it be when it seizeth on my selfe? This crosse is nothing, lesse than nothing, compared to what I haue iustly deserued, and must certainly suffer, if I prevent it not by godly sorrow. I will therefore grieue, not for so trifling a thing as this, but for the sinnes which will procure ten thousand times worse misery. Ah wretch that I am, ah wicked wretch, why haue I broken the Lords Sabbath? why haue I abused Gods Sacrament? why haue I beene drunken, or suffered, and not punished drunkennesse? why haue I set light by Gods threats, which I heard other Sabbaths? why haue I beene vniust? why haue I lyed, coozened, and vsed hard dealing, to get that I cannot keepe? why was I niggardly when

I had it, that could not tell how long I should haue it? why did I mis-pend so much thus, and so much thus? why did I thinke highly of my selfe for my goods? and trust in them, and could neuer thinke I had enough? or why was I so vnthankfull, as still to mutter, that I had nothing, and enuy that others had so much? These bee the faults that haue kindled this flame, and will kindle a worse; O for these let mee weepe, Lord, They be vile faults, vnreasonable, absurd, foolish, contrary to the written word, and the law of naturall wisdom, and doe giue thee iust cause of being yet more angry. Oh foolish heart, why hast thou thus sinned! Be ashamed, O my soule, be sorrowfull, be vile in thine owne eyes, because thou hast so greatly transgressed thy duty, and prouoked God. Brethren if you will endeouour thus to rectifie your sorrowes, they will become godly sorrowes, and they will purge away sinne.

But lastly, you must remember this crosse often, so as to consider of it, and pray for this fruit of it. The too soone forgetting of blowes makes the little childe to be little the better for them, and to draw vpon himselfe new stripes, by renewing his former faults; but you must not play the children thus, you must often, often call to minde the terriblenesse of these flames, and the doubts, feares, cryes and lamentations which you found in your selues, and heard and saw in others; and you must beseech the Lord to make you profit by the strokes of his hand, and to sanctifie the present affliction, and all other to your bettering: Represent to your owne thoughts many times the miserablenesse and fearefulnesse of the sight you saw, when you saw your owne, and so many of your neighbours houses

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deliuered

deliuered ouer to the roaring flames, and your selues vnable to rescue them. Make those thoughts often present with you which you had then, and strue to pull into your minds the same affections, and then cry to God, O Lord, now make me to profit by these crosses in hauing mine heart made more and more out of loue with sinne in generall, and chiefly with such and such sinnes. If God chastise vs, and teach vs of his wayes, happy be we, and doublesse he will teach vs if we call to mind his corrections, and beg teaching. So haue you the best directions I could giue for the practise of this Truth; shall I craue your leaue to subioyne a few words, for vse, and I haue done.

Two things must be commended to each of your considerations. First those that are guiltie of not amending on former chastisements, must take notice of their sinne to be humbled at it. An incorrigible person is a great sinner: and what is hee but incorrigible whom the blowes of Gods hand haue not reformed? How can that disease but kill, which is obstinate against medicines? How can those sinnes but damme which will not be driuen away by corrections? The rod of correction, saith *Salomon*, will chase away the folly that is bound to a chilles heart; and those to whom their folly cleaueth so fast that the rod of correction will not stirre it, cannot bee esteemed Gods children, but his enemies, and therefore the sword of vengeance must cut them off. I am sorrie to be the messenger of heauie tydings, but truth must bee told, tho it displease neuer so much. Let all them know whom Gods afflictions haue not brought to a carefull shunning of sinne, that either sorer blowes must come to effect that which the lighter haue not, or else they must  
utterly



utterly perish. Hath not God met with thee in thy dayes? hath not he visited thee in thy children, in thy goods, in thy health, in thy name, in any of the things that are naturally deare vnto thee? if yea, what hath beene the issue? Hast thou made light of some of them refusing to feele them? and though perhaps some others haue made thee smart and roare (yea and that it may be so, as to confesse thy fault and promise amendment: ) yet no sooner wast thou loosed from the bands of aduersitie, but thou didst returne to the ancient licentiousnesse of sinning? wast thou a Drunkard, a follower of vaine company, a gamester, a lyer, a coozener, a wanton, a Sabbath breaker, a swearer, a rayler, a worldly minded man, a reuengefull man, a sinner in any kinde euen as bad as before? I say is this thy case? then stand still and heare thy doome from the mouth of him whom thou callest thy Sauour; *A worse thing shall befall thee.* This returning backe to the same crimes, after confession, after submission, after promises of reformation, is a wonderfull dangerous fault, it shewes a world of guile and hardnesse in the heart; it shewes that a man flatters God with his lips, it shewes that hee hath set his loue vpon sinne, and if any man haue serued the Lord thus, like a deceitfull bow, some few times, as *Pharoah* did, let him bee assured that the Lord is euen out of all hope of him as it were, and if hee be gotten to some present ease and prosperitie, it is because the Lord is whetting his sword to cut him off. Great is his danger that hath refused to receiue correction, and to turne, that hath beene as base metall, which no melting can refine, that hath beene like such filthy clouts, which no washing can make cleane: that hath beene like the fretting leprosie, which after

scraping off the dust and new plastering, doth breake out againe. That house must be pulled downe; those clouts must be cast to the Dunghill, that mettall must be flung away, and that man must sincke into hell. I pray you euery man to consider if himselfe be not such, and if hee bee, now take notice of thine hardnesse, wilfulnesse, guilfulnesse, loue of sinne, contempt of Gods hand, obstinacy against his rod, and now fall downe, and lament this sinne, and returne to God againe: renew thy promises which thou madest in aduersitie, and seeke to performe them, that thou maiest not bee destroyed. O let this admonition of the word, so reuiue the remembrance of thy griefes, and of thy purposes, and of thy faire words which thou gauest vnto God and man, that thou mayst tremble to thinke of thy great wickednesse, in going backe from thy good words to thy bad deeds, and mayest now returne againe to thy former purposes, and put them in execution.

And secondly; brethren, I must speake to you all and each in regard of the present calamitie; your eyes tell you that God hath smitten you, who else could haue made the winde and flame to meete so right, and to continue together so long? your cares tell you what vse the Lord lookes that you should make of his blowes. Now in the Lords name I request, yea require you, to take this happy counsell of our Lord IESVS CHRIST. All of you in generall must doe this, The Towne is as a common body, one Person. Tho this stroke haue not light vpon euery one, yet hath it falne vpon the whole, as the childe is corrected, when one part is made to smart; wherefore all in generall, are called by God

to a carefull amendment of their liues. Doe not thinke, you whose goods and houses stand intire and vntouched, that you be not as great offenders as your brethren; doe not thinke that the Lord hath not shewed his anger to you, and against you for your sinnes. As the tongue doth offend in periurie, and the eares are punished by being nailed to the pillorie; and as the hand offendeth in theft, and the backe receiueth the stripes in being whipped: so when a whole Towne hath sinned, God striketh some one part for the common sinnes, as here among you, for if hee should haue smitten euery one, it would haue beene the destruction of the Towne, and not their correction. And when hee findeth an whole Nation sinfull, hee smiteth some Townes and Cities, to admonish all, as lately by the Plague; for if all should haue beene alike smitten, all had beene lost. I beseech you therefore to see Gods hand against your selues for your offences, and resolute to sinne no more in any of those things whereof you are guiltie. God hath shewed more gentlenesse to you, in that others haue borne the blowes, which the sinnes that you haue committed, as well as theirs, haue deserued; make not a lesse good vse of Gods hand, because he hath shewed more clemency and gentlenesse. It is an ill vse of mercy to grow carelesse and hard-hearted.

Let vs all therefore resolute to sinne no more, no more to prouoke Gods anger, to hazard our selues no more, no more to draw his stripes vpon vs. Is not this burning great enough? Haue not those flames frightened you enough? is not this losse sufficient? Would you another fire? another wind? a more violent wind? a more furious flame? if not (as I know you cannot



make so fond a choise) O let the Lord haue his purpose, and attaine his desires now at this once, without any more adoe. What can the childe gaine by neglecting and setting light by his fathers threats, but, that blowes must follow? What by stouting it out against one blow, and not regarding to mend at the first stroke, but that his father must take the rod in hand againe, and make him smart with harder stripes? Brethren I haue often spoken to you in Gods name. The last Tuesday, my Text seruing, I called you to amendment, you see what hath followed. If being now admonished againe, after corrections, you refuse to make this onely right vse of both, the Lord will not be set downe, hee will deale peruersly with the peruerse, as the Psalme hath it, and be hard-hearted with the hard-hearted, as we see in the case of *Pharaoh*; and though he may defer a time to giue you space and time for amendment, yet in due time, and after a fit space he will againe returne to visit you with more seuerity. Wherefore as you loue your owne ease, as you desire the continuance of your prosperity, as you wish no more to seele such fore and heavy crosses, promise, resolute, endeouour to *sinne no more*, breake the Sabbath no more palpably, abuse the Sacrament no more grossly. Bee no more drunken, bee no more sparing to Drunkards, but let each of you practise sobriety in himselfe, and the Governours punish drunkenness in others. Be no more fearelesse of God, be no more vngratfull for your constant preservation; Get no more by vnrighteous dealing, or immoderate labour; keepe no more from God or his poore, or the publike state, spend no more wastfully, sinfully, excessiueley; Be no more proud that you  
are

are rich; Trust no more in vncertaine riches, couet not to get more, grumble not that you haue so little, enay not that others exceed you in wealth. I pray you resolute to fling from you all sinnes, most of all your most pretious sinnes; and in particular, and with speciall care, those sinnes which I haue named. Why will you not dwell in safetie, why will you not enioy your goods and houses? Why will you not saue your selues from more and worse miseries? The Lord sends his Word amongst you to make you profit by his blowes. Hee doth not grudge you your wealth, but takes it from you to giue you notice that your sinnes displease him. He is not delighted in your misery, no more than your selues are in the smart of your children; It is your amendment that hee seeketh, endeuoureth, calleth for; and without this, nothing will, nothing can, nothing should please him. If he should correct for sinne once, and after suffer it vnreformed, he should deale vniustly, vnwisely, weakely, not like himselfe. Either those euils that I haue named, and the rest of which you are guilty, be naught and wicked, or they be not so. If they be not wicked, why should he correct you at all? if they be, why should he cease correcting, afore you cease sinning? It is not crying out, it is not roaring and lamenting, it is not a whimpering confession of sinnes, it is not a clamorous calling for mercy, that will pacifie God, or serue your turnes for safety. All seeming remorse, all shewes of humiliation, all blubbering and crying, is worth nothing, nay it is a greater prouocation to him, if withall, you ioyne not as the effect and fruit of all, this of our blessed Sauiour, *Sinne no more.* Of this you must mind euery man himselfe, euery one his or her yoke-fellow, his or her neigh-

neighbour, for this you must call vpon your selfe  
 Oh that I could bee able to *sinne no more*; for this you  
 must call vpon God, O Lord that requirest amend-  
 ment, worke amendment, Inable as well as  
 command, and then through thy grace  
 I will promise what thou requirest,  
 and performe what I haue pro-  
 mised, Lord I will *sinne*  
*no more.*

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**FINIS.**

*Ad 2a. 2a.*

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THE  
REDEMPTION OF  
TIME.

*the then*  
OR,  
A SERMON CONTAINING  
VERY GOOD REMEDIES  
FOR THEM THAT

*haue misspent their time: shewing how*

*they should redeeme it comfortably.*

BY WILLIAM WHATELY, PREACHER  
and Minister c<sup>t</sup> Banbury in Oxford-  
shire.

PSAL. 90. 12.

*Lord teach vs to number our daies, that we may apply our  
hearts vnto wisdom.*



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# THE REDEMP- TION OF TIME.

EPHES. 5. 16.

*Redeeme the Time, because the dayes are euill.*



Hilest I bethought my selfe  
of a portion of holy Writ to  
treate vpon, that might hold  
some agreement with the  
present season : this short  
sentence offered it selfe vnto  
my minde. At the first I re-  
iected it as impertinent, but

after a second and more serious view, me thought  
it was the most fit Scripture that I could make  
choice of, on this occasion : for howbeit it hath  
pleased the common sort of men, to stile these fe-  
stiuall dayes with the name of good times; yet by  
reason of the grosse abuse to which the corrup-  
tion of men hath made them subiect, they may ve-  
ry well receiue an alteration of their title, and in  
a quite contrary phrase, be tearmed euill daies;  
yea, and that in the highest degree of all, the worst  
of dayes. Now in this time wherein time is so la-

uishly



uifly miffpent, I hope it cannot feeme vnconuenient, or vntimely, to giue a brieſe exhortation concerning the right vſe of Time.

Theſe words which I haue read, leade vs into that path : being part of an exhortation begun in the former verſe. There in generall, he had exhorted them to be moſt ſtrictly carefull of their waies, and to direct their courſe of life in ſuch reſpectiue fort, as they might deſerue the name of wiſe, not vnwiſe men : commending herein vnto them and vs, that very ſtrictnes and preciſeneſſe, wherewith the world hath now long ſince pickt a quarrell and falne out. And becauſe this was but a generall rule, he ſeconds it with ſome particulars, by which wee may bee led on to the like inſtances in other matters. The firſt of theſe ſpecials is placed in the well diſpoſing of time, in this verſe : Where hauing ſet downe the dutie of Chriſtians in this behalfe, he backes it with a reaſon ; which in it ſelfe and to a ſpirituall vnderſtanding, is moſt ſound and firme ; but to the carnall iudgement of a carnall man, is voide of all ſoundneſſe and reaſon. The duty is, to buy out the time, to traffique with it, as men doe with wares ; and when it is in other mens hands (as I may ſay) to giue ſomething (yea, any thing) that we may get it into our owne hands for good vſes. He meanes, that wee ſhould vſe our greateſt care and diligence (euen that which we would imploy in matters moſt neerely concerning vs) to win all the time we poſſibly can, for the duties of Religion and Godlineſſe. His argument to confirme this exhortation, is taken from the contrary,

trarie, (if we looke on it with a carnall eye, it will seeme inconsequent, halting and not able to beare vp the Conclusion) it is, *because the daies are euill*: that is, the customes and manners of the greatest part of men that liue, are wicked and lewde. Now because the number and route of the world is so strongly bent to all manner of vngodlinesse, as that they haue euen tainted the time it selfe, and corrupted the very dayes; the Apostle would therefore haue the Ephesians, and all other Christians so much the more industrious, to take all seasons & occasions for the bettering of themselues. Because other men are naught, and starke naught, therefore ought faithfull Christians to be good, and very good, and to turne all opportunities to this end and vse, that they may be furtherances to make them good.

The world would haue framed a more crooked conclusion from this ground, and haue said: because men are so generally and extreame bad (for that is noted in saying, *the dayes are euill*) wee must therefore needes straine curtesie a little, and not be too strict, lest we should be ouermuch different from other men, and incur the by-name of Singularists. But the Apostle telleth vs, that because the waies of men are excessiue disordered, and ful of naughtinesse, we should bestow so much the more paines, that wee might not bee carried downe the violent streame and deluge of vnsanctified liuing; and vnto this entent should earnestly watch, and diligently take all good occasions of getting and doing good. You see in part the meaning

ning of this short sentence, which containeth a few words indeed, but is stufte full of worthy matter, which (according as my weakenesse can attaine) I shall strue to spread before your eyes, vn- folding it in such manner, as that you may perceiue the things, that lay therein closely wrapped vp before.

*Doct.*

The point which the words offer to our consideration at the first sight, is this; that all Christians ought to bee very good husbands for their time. Good houres and opportunities are merchandize of the highest rate and price: and whosoever will haue his soule thriue, must not suffer any of these bargaines of time to passe him, but must buy vp, and buy out all the minutes thereof. No man of trade can bee more carefull to chaffer and deale in the most gainefull things that pertaine to his occupation, than wee should bee to deale in this ware of time, wherein euery Christian is, or should be a well taught and practised dealer. As such kind of men (if they can either make money themselues, or borrow it of their friends; yea, or else (such is the greedinesse of men) take it vp of the Vsurer) will not let slip any commodity, wherein they haue skill, and are perswaded, that it will bring in large profit within a short time of returne: so should euery good man vse all diligence, (for diligence is in stead of money here, and care in stead of coyne) to gaine euery day, euery houre, and euery minute (so much as may be possible) from all vnprofitable actions, and ouer-worldly affaires, to bestow the same on the duties of Religion



on and Godlinesse. This being such a parcell of ware, as if it bee wisely bestowed, when it is heedfully gotten, will come in againe with both hands full of profit for recompence of ones paines taken in that behalfe. This selfe-same exhortation, this same Apostle deliuers in so many words vnto the Collossians, when he saith: *Walke wisely towards them that are without, and redeeme the time.* See how Paul, an old beaten and experienced dealer in these matters for the soule, doth neither forget, nor neglect to teach his apprentices (as I may call them) the very secrets and mysteries of the trade of good liuing, whereof this is one, euen the thriftie laying out and getting in of time: which being repeated to the Collossians (as well as deliuered to these Ephesians), comes with a double charge vpon our mindes, to make vs heedfull in these bargaines. And that excellent petition of Moses (the man of God) doth meane nothing else but this, when in other words hee saith: *Teach me so to number my daies, that I may apply my heart to wisdom.* For he meanes, that God would inable him with grace, so seriously to consider of the shortnesse of this life, and the transitorinesse of this present world; as that he might take all occasions, and vse all meanes to bend his heart to the seeking and obtaining of the true knowledge of God and himselfe, and so the true feare of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.

col. 4. 5.

Psal. 90. 12.

And the want of this husbandrie, Christ doth mournfully lament in the Citie of Ierusalem, setting out vnto vs also the grieuous and dismall effects

Luke 9.42.

fects and consequents of this heedlesnesse, in regard of taking time, and vsing the fit opportunity. O (saith he) if thou haddest euen knowne, at the least in this thy day, those things that pertain vnto thy peace! But now are they hid from thine eyes, &c. As if he had said: Hitherto thou hast had the meanes to learne what made for thy good, and what might haue preuented thy ruine; and if thou haddest but euen at this last houre marked and considered them, thou mightest haue escaped these fearefull iudgements: but now that thou hast been all this while wanting to God, hee will hereafter bee wanting to thee; thou shalt neuer haue any true knowledge of these things, nor euer auoide these miserable calamities. Because they did not vse time, whilst time did serue, to repent and turne to God, therefore after, it was too late, God would not heare them nor helpe them. They that refuse the good offer of a good bargaine from God, shall not haue this bargaine offered again at their pleasure: yea, God wil not deale with them at their leasure, that would not deale with him at his leasure. And Wisdō (in Salomons wise book of Prouerbs) speaks to this effect of vngodly men; that when their miserie comes, she will laugh at them; because when she gaue her good instructions to preuent this miserie, they laughed at her.

Pro. 24.25.  
26.27.

The neglect of taking the fit time and occasion to follow Wisedoms wholesome counsell, and to come when shee calls, plungeth scornfull men into such a depth of miserie, as that there is no meanes of reconery. For when wisdom laughs  
a man

a man to scorne, whither shall hee repaire for succour? And to this intent (of husbanding our time well) notable is the saying of the same Apostle in another place, bidding vs, *whilest we haue time, doe good to all*: as much as if he had told vs, that time must so much the rather bee bestowed in doing good (and then it is redeemed), because wee haue no such great store of it, as we doe foolishly imagine. The vessell of time is not so full (as most men dreame), nay it will soone come to the bottome: it is then wisdome to spare betime, and not in the very dregs and lees. All these places doe in most plaine manner confirme the point, *viz.* that euery Christian must be very sauing and thriftie of his time; that is, must conuert all occasions to the good of his soule, and furthering of his reckoning; not suffering by his wil any houre or minute (more than needs must) to bee laid out in any thing, but matters that may fit him for a better life. This is in truth to haue ones conuersation in heauen, when one vpon the least occasion is readie to make one step further thitherwards: when one giues all his time to God, but so much as may be more especially to religious exercises, and such things as doe after a peculiar sort make for a better life; not letting slip any meanes of furtherance, that is offered him this way. Now for your better directiō in this sauing thrift, & for the more full vnderstanding of this point, and more easie practising of this needfull duty, I purpose to stand some while in shewing these two things. First, from what Time is to be redeemed. Secondly, what the time is, which must be redeemed.

Gal. 6. 10.



*Stoology  
of time*

For the first, we must vnderstand, that there bee five Hucksters of time, very Cormorants and Ingrofers of this precious ware; which betwixt them (for the most part) get vp all the houres of mens liues, not suffering the soule to enioy so much as an houre for it owne vse, vpon the best occasion to benefit it selfe. These theeues, when I haue told you their names, I will describe more at large. They be; first, vaine sports; secondly, vaine speeches; thirdly, immoderate sleeping, or sluggishness; fourthly, vaine thoughts; lastly, immoderate following of worldly businesses and affaires. Play, Twatling, Sleeping, Foolish thinking, Excessiue rooting in the earth. Now for these fond sports (amongst which I comprehend riotous feasting and belly-cheare, a companion of gaming for the most part, and also that trifling and womanish disease of curiousnesse in putting on appa-  
(: rel): for these (I say) it is easie to proue, that they doe cate vp these good houres, which otherwise would much enrich the soule of man. Salomon (the wisest of meere men that liued since Adam) hath set it downe as a sure rule (that neuer failes, scarce euer admits exception), *That he which loues pastime shall be poore, and he that loues wine and oyle shall not be rich.* If this saying be vnderstood onely of the body, it is most true: For these things will make a man extremely needy in the midst of large possessions, and plentuous reuenewes. But if we apply it to the soule (as I see not cause why it may not be applied to both) it is most vniuersally true. He that is so wedded to his pleasures, and befotted vpon

PROV. 21. 17.

vpon vaine delights, as that the current of his life is carried that way, or else too great a part of the streame is turned thither; shall be destitute of vnderstanding, shall haue a naked, ragged, tattered soule: and that comes, because he hath not vsed his time well; by the right imployment whereof he might haue got welth for his better part, I meane vnto his mind and hart. A thread-bare hart-needy of knowledge, comes from a voluptuous life stuffed with pleasures: and the Prophet *Isaiah* cryes out with a wofull and a bitter cry against those, which had the timbrell, the pipe, and the harpe in their feast, but would not regard the worke of the Lord: all their dayes were taken vp in eating and drinking, in banquetting and feasting, in good cheare and merry-making; so that there was no time to meditate and thinke on those afflictions, whereby God did warne them to repentance and amendment; which is most contrary to this duty of redeeming the time, for all this time is euen lost and cast away. And had wee no other prooffe than our owne experience in this behalfe, would it not manifestly conuince, that hee which desires to redeeme the time, must flie these vaine delights and sports? For doe we not plainely see, what a canker it is in a number of mens liues? when (many dayes) they bestow three or foure houres together, yea halfe the day, if not the whole, in dicing, carding, bowling, shouel-boord, or the like idle (if not wicked) exercises? doth not this waste and poure foorth time ouer-lauishly? Or can that man haue so much rest and quiet,

*Isai. 5. 12.*

or so much fitnessse and opportunitie to doe good to his soule, as his wise care in cutting off these needlesse recreations (or vexations rather) would haue afforded him? For these vaine pleasures are not alone mischieuous hinderers of this thrift, in that they consume the very houres themselues; but as much, or more also in that they dissittle the heart, and pull the affections out of ioynt: so that a man is driuen to take as much paines to set his heart to a good exercise, as would well haue dispatched the dutie, had he not been thus vnfit-  
ted. Now what a miserable losse is it, when a man is robbed of his time, & of his heart both at once? and by both kept from reading, praying, meditating, examining his heart, or any such good exercise for his soules aduantage. Wherefore if any man would so preuent these vaine and foolish sports, that they should not spoyle him of his hart and houres: let him obserue these two rules in his sports, and then hee shall doe well in these respects.

First, (this being presupposed, that he doe not vse any recreations, but those which he can proue to be in themselues lawfull): first, I say, for the beginning of recreation; let euery man know, that recreation must follow labour, for the most part: or if at any time it goe before it, it must be very little, only to fit one for labour. The Lord allowes a man no sport, (though neuer so lawfull in it selfe) vntill such time as his body or minde doe stand in need of it; chiefly when they haue been busied in some such honest affaires, as by wearying them, haue



haue made them vnfit to further labour, so that they must againe be fitted thereto by recreation. Vntil paines-taking haue made the body or mind not so well able to take paines, there is no allowance ordinarily for recreation. All our sports and recreations, if we will vse them well, (I speake of those which are lawfull) must be to our body or minde; as the Mowers whetstone or rifle is to his Sythe, to sharpen it when it growes dull. Hee that when his Sythe is dulled, will not (vpon a desire to doe more worke) take time to whet it, shall cut lesse, and with more paine, and more vnhandsomely than he need to doe: so he, that when his body or minde is tyred or heauy, will not vse some honest refreshing, shall doe lesse, and with lesse dexteritie than he might. But on the other side, if the Mower should doe nothing from morning to noone, or from noone to night, but whet, whet, whet, rubbing his Sythe, he would both marre the Sythe, and be counted an idle work-man also, for losing his daies worke; so he that will runne after the most honest delights, when neither the wearinesse of his body, nor heauinesse of minde requires the same (but only vpon a fond lust or longing after them), shall in time destroy his wit and strength, and in the meane season marueilous vnthrifely misspend his time. Therefore let not a man begin the day with play, though neuer so lawfull, vnlesse his body or minde require some necessary exercise to make it more apt for his calling. He that sets into the day sportingly, shall be sure to goe through it, either lumpishly or sinfully,

John Buxton  
1638.  
Lib.

John Buxton  
His Booke 1638.

ly, much more if hee spend all the day from morning to night in playing; let it be neuer holy-day, or haue hee what other excuse hee. This rule is for the beginning of sports.

The second is for the measure and continuance of them, where this is a generall and a firme direction; that it is not lawfull for a man in an ordinary course, to spend more time in any pastime, vpon any day, than in religious exercises. I meane chiefly priuate religious exercises; I say, it is vtterly vnlawfull to bestow a larger time any day vpon the most lawfull delight, than in priuate religious exercises, or at least in a customable course so to doe. This is plainly proued by that which Christ speakes to vs, saying: *First seeke the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof.* You see heere commanded to preferre the seeking of heauen, before any other thing whatsoeuer; to let that haue the chief place in our soules, and in our liues. Now he that first seekes the kingdome of heauen, cannot bestow more time in sports of any sort, than in those things which doe directly make for the obtaining of eternall life, and that righteousness which will bring one thereunto; such as are, hearing and reading the Word, praying, meditating, examining the heart, conferring, and the like. And surely this is a most equall thing, that the most needfull dutie, should haue the most time bestowed vpon it. Yea, and it is a most easie rule to all sorts of men, that haue seasoned their hearts with the true feare of God. For if a mans calling lie in bodily workes, then the very exercises

Matth. 6. 33.

ses of religion are a refreshing to his body, in that he doth for the space while they continue, desist from his bodily labour, (and his calling affords sufficient stirring of the body for health); so that if hee be religiously minded, and haue indeed set his delight on God, hee may well giue as much time to these actions, as to any carnall sports. But if any mans calling lie in studie, or such like labor of the minde; first, the change is a great refreshing, and varietie a delight; and then there be religious exercises, which will refresh the minde as well as any sports; and for so much exercise as health requires, it is not long in vsing, because nature is here, as in other matters, content with a little, howsoever men seeke excuses by belying her: so that at the least, an equall portion of time must be allotted to God and Religion; as to sports and delights, euen of students, if they will first seek the kingdome of God. Therefore let a man measure out the time of sporting and recreating himselfe, by the time he takes to pray, to reade, to meditate, to sing Psalmes, to conserue of good things, or the like; and know that hee hath not libertie from God to employ ordinarily so much time, neuer to employ one minute more, in the most vnoffensiuē sports, than in these seruices of God. Now let a man conforme himselfe to these two rules: Begin not to play, till need of body or mind craue it: Continue not sports longer than a man hath, or shall continue some godly priuate exercise of religion; and hee shall saue his time well from this first Theefe.

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Now



2

Matth. 12 36.

Now comes to be considered the next spender, or rather robber of time, that is, idle twatling or babbling: & concerning this, our Saviour Christ deales plainly with vs, saying: *That of euery idle word which men shall speake, they shall giue account at the day of iudgement*: thinke well of this sentence, and lay vp euery word. Thou must not alone giue account of thy workes, but also of thy words: thou must not alone be called to a reckoning for mouing of thy hand, foote, or whole body, but of thy tongue also: and that not alone for wicked words, sinfull words, harmefull words, speeches in themselves infectious and rotten; but for idle and wast words; and not only for a number of idle words, for a whole throng or fleet of them, but for euery idle word.

Now then if there bee an account to be giuen, and a reckoning to bee made for these rubbishish speeches; iudge, if it be not a want of redeeming the time, to lay it out in such a thing as will bring a sore and heauy burthen afterwards without repentance to cast it off; and iudge if hee which makes much of time had not need take much heed of this ill spent breath. Not alone then wicked speaking (when one belcheth forth lewd and filthy words) not slanderous and backbiting talke, (when one whispers of his neighbours faults behinde his backe, vttering (perhaps) also lying reports, and fathering that vpon him which he neuer did, or meant); but euen vaine, needlesse, and vnprofitable words, (which tend to no good or wholesome vse for the soule or body) are a mispending of time, and contrary to this precept; and

and therefore also to bee shunned of him that is this way thriftily disposed.

No man can talke idly, but he casts himselfe vpon a double damage, euen the losse of a word, and the losse of time: two great losses, what euer men imagine of them: And therefore the Apostle *Paul* also finds fault with a certaine sort of women that were praters, which would goe from house to house, twatling and babling out frothy speech, that was good for nothing; which fault hee condemnes as a matter something worse than idlenesse, or doing nothing, when one talkes toys or trifles, and speakes shadowes or gawds that yeeld no profit. Such twatling cuts out the hart of good time, for it hath seldome any measure, it creepes by little and little ouer a great part of the day, and sometimes of the night. How many winter nights doe men suffer themselues to be robbed of, by this childish babling? And in the 4. verse of this chap. the Apostle forbids foolish speaking and iesting: The one is a rousing discourse, gathering together a great deale of chaffie geere, that will feede no man: a busie, but absurd prosecuting of a headlesse and footlesse tale (as we may call it in our phrase). The other is a setting of ones selfe, and sharpening of his wit, to coine prettie and wittie scoffes and conceits that may moue laughter, and for this end only: both these are condemned, as vnlawfull, and vnbecoming Christians.

*Ephes. 5. 4.*

There must bee a difference made betwixt a smooth and pleasant vttering of ones minde in seemely phrases, and good and delightfull termes

and manner: and this whetting of the wit, to bandie and tosse sharp and brinish taunts and quirks.

Now this pleasantnesse of the most honest sort is not to be vsed as a custome, but in the nature of a refreshing, when men are dulled for better matter. For laughter being a power of Gods creating, and wholesome to the body, and therefore lawful, it cannot be vnlawfull in a seemely sort, harmelesly to moue laughter by words; but it must not be iesting: one must not giue himself to it, and make it his occupation for an houre or two together. Now none can be ignorant, how great an hinderance this vaine speech is to the well imploying of time. For doe wee not see, that in many places, whole daies are cast away in the deepe gulfe of rousing, and vnprofitable runnagate-babbling to no purpose? And that whole meales are deuoured in gibing and iesting, if without taking the sacred name of God in vaine, and hurting ones brothers name, (which is very seldome) yet excesssiuely, and not without thrusting out better matter, which is a grieuous fault. Wherefore that we may be well armed against this robber, let vs obserue diligently these two rules.

First, let vs make conscience of our words, and of the mouing of our tongue, knowing it to be a necessary duty that God hath imposed vpon vs, to haue our words alwaies gracious, and seasoned with salt; alwaies good for the matter, and tempered with wisdom for the manner. Which precept the Apostle addes presently after this, of redeeming the time (to the Colossians) as a notable

part



part of it. The law of grace then must be the bridle of our tongue, and Wisedome must raigne in our mouthes; so that we speak nothing but that which may bee for some profit, to our owne or others soule or body, being fitly tempered to the present circumstances of time, place, &c. where and when we speake. For the words are gracious, not alone when they tend to the further edification of the soule in some matter of Religion; but also when they be busied about ones honest outward affaires and lawfull calling, this being a great furtherance to godlinesse, that a man may know how (and accordingly practise it) to follow his calling with dexteritie and wisedome.

Now hee that would not haue vnnecessary trifling words steale into his heart, and out of his mouth, and so spoyle him of good seasons, must set it downe, as a thing to which his conscience is bound, (as well as not to lye, sweare, or slander) not to speake one word, whereof he cannot giue some reason from the good that he doth aime at in speaking of it. And euery man must know, that hauing let slip such a word, hee hath committed such a sinne, as makes him liable to Gods iudgement, and to the sentence of condemnation.

The want of resoluing the heart thus, causeth many to take liberty to their tongues, (and harmfull liberty it is) and yet to thinke they haue done no harme to themselues in so doing. And therefore the common excuse of such twatlers is this: I hope that it is no harme: yea, but what good was it? If it were not directed to some good, it hath

done harme, for it hath broken Gods commandement, and set thy selfe deeper in debt than thou wast before, thou hast one trespasse more to answer for, before Gods tribunall: no man shall euer auoid this puddle, that will not be perswaded it is a damnable sinne to step into it. First then, labour to conuince thine heart, and frame thy practise to this rule in all speaking.

Secondly, for honest comely mirth in speech, (besides that it must not relish of lust, nor saueur of malice and prophanenesse, for then it is worse than idle words) it ought to bee bounded with this rule; namely, that it bee vsed as a meanes to quicken our selues or others against some naturall heauinesse or deadnesse, by which the heart is made vnapt for better conference, and other exercises of more profitable vse; and when this effect is brought to passe, that laughter hath scattered the mist of dulnesse, from off the heart and mind, (or if no such occasion be offered) then let mirth and naturall laughter, giue place to his betters: otherwise comming into a continued custome, and shouldering out more needfull communication, it takes the name and nature of iesting, and is a thing much vnbecoming the staiednesse of a Christian. Thus the tongue may be bound from dealing falsely with the heart, and coufening the soule of good houres and occasions.

Now followeth the third deuourer of time, and that is immoderate sleeping or sluggishnesse. The wise King *Salomon* bare a great hatred to this Theefe, and giues many warnings and caueats, where-

whereby men might learne to take heed of it. The bed is a very cunning and slye coufouer, that vseth a pleasing tricke to deceiue a man, and robs him, vnder shew of friendship. Now *Salomon* hath made a most fit description of a sluggard, caught by the wiles of sleepe and sloth: setting him out to the light, *Pro. 6. 9. 10. 11.* where hee brings him in roming himselfe, and rubbing his eyes with an vnwilling hand, vttering broken and sleepeie sentences, as one not halfe awake. First, hee calls him vp (as it were) saying: *How long wilt thou sleepe, when wilt thou rise out of thy sleepe?* As if he had said: Ho, sir, it is time to get vp, what, not out of your bed yet, at this time of the day? Then marke the drowfie, slumbring, and senselesse answer: *A little sleepes, a little slumbers,* (for the Originall hath the words in the plurall number, well befitting a sluggard) *a little folding of the hands to sleepe.* See how speaking of sleepe all is in the littles: and though he names sleepes, yet it is but a little in his conceit. He tels not when he will rise, but hee cannot rise yet; and when he hath had enough, and too much already, then he must haue a little more, begging fore sleepe as one would beg for bread. He askes a little, because hee would not be denied. First, hee must haue sleepes, and hauing slept, he must haue slumbers, and hauing slumbred, hee must fold his hands, and come and tumble himselfe. Behold a sleeper in his colours: and marke what answer *Salomon* giues, he spends no more time to call him vp, but tels him his doome as he lies in his bed: *Therefore thy pouertie comes as a traoueller, and thy necessitie*

*Pro. 6. 9. 10. 11.*



*necessitie as an armed man.* As if he had said: Well, be it so, if you will needs, sleep on, take your bellyfull of sleepe, but know, that sith you shew such skill in begging sleepe, you shall euen become a begger for it; sith you will haue your fill of sleep, you shall haue little enough of any wealth; pouertie will pursue you, and ouertake you; it will follow you, and surprize you, it will make haste and strike home, you cannot runne from it, nor resist it, it comes with speed and with force; it will take you in bed, where you cannot flie away from it, nor driue it from you: and what he saith of outward pouertie, is most certaine of inward penury; a sluggard hath so much the lesse grace, by how much hee hath the more sleepes and slumbers. So the same wise King hath set out a sluggard in another place, saying: that a sluggard tumbles himselfe on his bed, as the doore on the hinges; that is, he is stil there, and there must be such adoe before he can be remoued from off his couch, as if one were to list a doore off the hookes; a man must come with leauers to heaue him off. Call him, waken him, bid him rise, &c. all is little enough to reare him. This sluggish humour (you see) is condemned long agoe, for a misspender of time. And surely it is not alone very dangerous, in regard of the quantitie and muchnesse of the time which it filcheth; but also in regard of the qualitie and goodnesse: for it ordinarily feedes gluttonously on the very fat of time; it eates the very flower of the day; & consumes the first fruits of our houres, enen the morning season. After sleepe hath made  
strong

Prou. 16. 14.

strong what labour hath weakened; after that nature hath been well refreshed, and the reuiued spirits come with a fresh supply of strength and nimbleness to serue the body and the mind: then for want of exercise all growes dull againe; as a band of Souldiers, that grow effeminate by lying in garrison without labour all the Summer. Thus it robbes one of the principall and most seasonable time, when the minde and body were both in the greatest fitnessse to reade, pray, meditate, or to dispatch and cast any matter of ones calling; it is a Theefe that robs one, not of his baggage stuffe, but euen of his gold and Iewels. (For some time is better than other, as much as some metall is better than others; and this alwaies for the most part, takes away the most precious); yea, it hath one trick as much, and more dangerous than the former: If a man giue himselfe to sluggishness, it will often follow him to the Church, and close vp his eyes, and eares, both of body and minde, from hearing and marking those most wholesome exhortations, which like so many pearles, Gods messenger with a liberall hand, according to the pleasure of his Lord, doth scatter amongst men, that who so will, may take them vp. The time of preaching and expounding the Word, with applying it, is the time of haruest, it is Gods market day; nay, it is his dole or princely congie, when hee giues gifts freely, and those of great worth too, vnto those that will take them. How can it chuse but be a great hindrance to a mans estate to sleep in haruest, and to be in bed at such a time, when so

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much

much wealth is bestowing? Therefore this sleep, you see, is a most craftie and pernicious deceiuer, and doth with much cunning ouer-reach a man, taking from him, for the most part, the morning time, and the time of hearing, two the most profitable seasons, and the most worthy to bee redeemed of all others. Now against the deceit of this false companion, a man may defend himselfe by following these two rules:

First, it is not lawfull for any man, vpon pretence of leasure from businesse, to take more sleepe than is required for the strengthening and refreshing of his nature. The measure of ones sleep, or lying in bed, must not bee according to ones businesse, but so much as his nature requires, for the better inabling of it to performe the duties of his calling, and of religion. Indeed a man may, and ought to breake his sleepe, and stint himselfe in this regard, when important businesse, either for the soule or body doe presse vpon him; but no man must take more sleep than is requisite for the sufficient refreshing of nature, vpon vacation of necessary affaires. The reason of this is plaine: It is a sinne to straine and stretch naturall things for the seruing of lust, beyond that end for which they were created and ordained. Now sleep, and lying in bed, was ordained for the strengthening of nature, and for the repairing of the spirits diminished by labour; wherefore it must not bee drawne beyond this end, to the satisfying of a sluggish humour. So that, as it were a fault for a man to sit and cram himselfe with meate, till his stomach



stomacke would turne backe the morsels, because no businesse did call him from the table: so it is a sinne to giue ones selfe to immoderate sleeping or slugging in bed (as our word is, to sleep compasse) because no vrgent matter doth call him vp. This is to be on the bed, as a doore on the hinges, that one cannot rise till a leauer come; that is, some thing euen almost of necessitie. It is wicked to surfet on sleepe, as well as on meate. So then it shall bee a great helpe against sluggishnes, to know that God allowes not any man to be sluggish, and therefore to accustome ones selfe to timely rising: for in this one thing custome hath as much power almost as in any thing, so that looke what is ones vse, that he shall hardly refraine. Hee that doth customably forsake his bed, so soone as hee feeles his nature fresh, and his spirits quickned, shall with ease keep on in so doing. But hee that takes liberty to laze himselfe, and dull his spirits for lacke of vse, shall find the more he sleeps, the more he shall be drowsie, till he become a very slaue to his bed, and make sleepe his master. So a healthfull body by confessing it to be his duty (and through custom, though hard at first) drawing vnto it a nature, may haue the morning at commād. And this is the first rule.

Secondly, for the time of hearing the word, he that would not be troubled with such sluggishnes then, must looke that he doe vse meate, and drink, and sleepe moderately, in the first season of it; and then striue to quicken himself against carnall heauineffe and sorrow, by prayer and meditation before hand: which two things will keepe a health-

full body in such good temper, that sleepe shal not ordinarily oppresse it in this most sacred exercise.

4 Now followes the fourth Theefe to be arraigned, and that is idle thoughts. Mans imaginations will be working, and tossing conceits, vp and downe almost continually. Now all men by nature are so tainted with the sicknesse of vanitie, that their minds wil runne willingly after nothing else, but that which vanity begets. And for this cause men haue taken vp a Prouerb, to dazle their eyes (if it might be) that this might not seeme a fault. They say, that *Thought is free*; as though one should neuer answer for idle thoughts. And it is the common excuse of men to say, They thinke no harme; as though it were enough, to hatch no mischieuous and harmefull Conceites, notwithstanding they doe exceede in idle and vnprofitable imaginations. Whereby it may be seene, that men are so farre from reforming this fault, and auoiding this theefe, that they will not take it for a fault, nor esteeme it as a theefe of time. But this swallowes vp most of our solitarie houres, when men are in bed, or alone in the night season, and cannot sleepe; or when they bee iourneying and walking without company, they cannot then possibly talke with others, when no man is present: yet their mind doth busie it selfe, in idle talking with it selfe, casting a thousand fond things before ones eyes; as, what if this should bee? or, what if that should come to passe? and much adoe, to little purpose. This rouing and frisking of the fantasie (like a wanton Calfe, let loose from the stall) is  
a fretting

a fretting worme, that eates out a great deale of most mens time, so that they cannot redeeme it for the profit of their hearts. This puts by good meditations, and suggests feathery & light stufte, that hath no good substance in it; froth and some, which is not nourishment to the mind, but rather poyson, in that it fills it full of wind; and a windie heart is no lesse burdensome, than a windie stomacke. This casts out the cogitation of Gods benefits, that one may not be thankfull for them; it shoulders away the thought of ones owne sinnes, that he may not renew his godly sorrow and repentance for them; it iussels out the consideration of Gods graces, that we cannot set our affections on fier, to long and labour after them. And in all these respects, it takes away the benefit of much good opportunity. For euery time a man is alone, separated from all company and outward busines, there is an excellent occasion of furthering his owne soule, offered vnto him. If any thing grieue him, he may freely disburthen his heart into Gods bosome; if he faulted any way, he may haue full and free scope to confesse and bewaile it; if hee want any good thing, there is leisure and place in as effectuall manner, and with as many words as one can, to beg it of the Lord. Thus great riches might come to the soule by a well-spent solitari-nesse: but vaine cogitations doe depriue a man of all this, and doe so blow vp the mind with that which is nothing, as it growes swollen, like the flesh of him which hath the dropsie, so that it may well be called the dropsie of the mind. Now, for



Prou 4. 23.

a helpe against this vanitie of the mind, breaking forth in idle thoughts and fancies; First, we must take the counsell of *Salomon*, *To keepe the heart with all diligence*. The heart is that which must be narrowly looked vnto, that euill and vnprofitable thoughts rise not vp in it. Here must be the special care to preuent, first breeding and ingendring of sinne in the most inward parts.

This Theefe will bee still filching and stealing time continually, doe what one can. Wherefore a watchful and wary eye must be had thereunto, and a diligent guard must be set before the heart, to keepe out such imaginations from entring, as bee like rogues and vagrants, worth nothing, and alwaies come to steale something. When a man makes conscience of his thoughts, and obserues them to what end they tend, this will bee an excellent helpe to keepe them from wandring; whereas if one will follow the prouerbe, and esteeme them as free, they will neuer be kept from a busie fondnesse, like Ants in a Mole-hill, that runne vp and downe, hither and thither, and doe nothing.

Then in the second place, we must labour to be provided before hand, of some profitable matter or subiect, whereunto to bend the thoughts in solitarinesse; something that tends to the glory of God, and our owne good, either in matters of the soule, or the lawfull affaires of the body, must bee let into the soule, to take vp the roome, that the busie fancies may be the better stopt out. And indeed the Lord hath provided a Christian of good store of such matter, if hee bee not wanting to himselfe.

For

For there is nothing that offers it self to any of our senses, which doth not also offer to our mind (if it were not starke blind) some glorious attribute of God to bee seene and considered of. So that to want occasion of good thoughts in this varietie of matter, is to want light at noone-tide, that proceeds from nothing but from want of eyes. But this is a great helpe to him, that can see to set his soule a worke first on the good things. For if one haue let his heart loose at first, he shall not (without much paines and toyle) catch it againe, and haue it within command. Thus doing, a great part of vaine cogitations shall be cut off.

Now comes to be handled the fifth and worst of all the five consumers of time; which is so much the more dangerous, because it is in some honest reckoning among most men; and is esteemed as the right Lord, and true owner of that time, which for the most part it holds by vsurpation & iniury. This is the immoderate care of the world, and of things of this life, though in themselves honest and lawfull; when a man doth wind himselfe into such a labyrinth and maze of affaires, as he cannot get out at fit times to spirituall and religious duties, at least not to those which are priuate: when the heart is so surcharged with bargaines and purchases, and buying and selling, and building, and such like; that God and goodnesse, Christ and saluation, Heauen and Hell, come not into a mans mind once in a day, scarce once in a weeke; or at least, if they come, they be quickly shut out, and haue no long nor quiet entertainement there: when the soule

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soule

*Matth. 22.**Matth. 13.**Hag. 1. 23.**Matth. 6. 33.**Verf. 20.*

Soule is ouerwhelmed with caring, thinking, deuising, and struiuing how to grow great here, and is so tossed in the gulse of earthly matters, that it cānot come to land (as it were) to settle it selfe in any proportion, to thinke how it may grow great in heauen, and how it may get possession of the true treasure. This is a wondrous consumer of good houres, digging them all into the dunghill of this world. Christ finds fault with this in the Parable: the men bidden to the feast, had Farmes, and Oxen, and Viues, & such matters in hand (busines forsooth of more importance than so) and therefore could not come. And the thornie ground had so much carking and caring how to liue, that it doth euen choake the Word, the good seed could not grow thereby. And the Lord complaines of them of the captiuitie of Iudah, that they could find time to build their owne houses, yea, and to seele them too; but they said, it was no time to build the house of God: so this sinne doth ingrosse all the time to it selfe, and will not giue elbow-roome to any good exercise, especially to any priuate exercises, without which, the publike are but as meate without digestion; and yet it comes like an honest and approueable thing, painted with the name of thriftinesse and paines in ones lawfull calling. To fence our selues against this rauenous and lurking fault, we must bind our selues to these three rules, which all depend vpon the rule of Christ, that bids *vs first seeke the kingdome of God, first in time, and first in affection*: And againe, *lay vp your treasure in Heauen*. Hence (I say) three rules may

may be collected, to which he that would not bee spoyled of good occasions to the soule by worldli- nesse, must more and more frame himselfe and his life.

The first is, that no man suffer himselfe to enter vpon so many businesses, or any so eagerly, as that his ordinary affaires should hinder himselfe, or his family from the performance of ordinary religious exercises.

The common and daily matters of this world, in any mans calling whatsoever, should not draw him, or his family, from common and daily duties of Religion; such are reading, praying, meditating, and religious obseruing of the Sabbath: for here a man must take care for his household, as well as for himselfe, that he doe not hinder them from taking conuenient time to pray, and reade, &c. by forcing vpon them an ouer-great burden of ordinary businesses. For if the soule be to be preferred before the body, and heauen before earth; then those customable matters that pertain to the sa- uing of the soule must be set before, much more stand equall with the things that pertain to the body. Secondly, the extraordinary workes of our calling (if any fall out) must not barre vs from the extraordinary workes of Religion. As for example, haruest and hay-time, or the like, are extraordinary times for the businesse for the body: so preparation to the Sacrament, fasting (if neede so require) and such like, are extraordinary workes for the soule; now as the care of inning ones corne or grasse, must not keepe him from taking time to  
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prepare himselfe to the Sacrament, or to fast at his neede: so the receiuing of the Lords Supper is matter of more than ordinary vse for the soule; and some needfull iourney stands in the like manner for the body, but a man must rather deferre his iourney (if it may be put off without ouer-much hinderance to him) than omit the receiuing of the Lords Supper. The same rule must be kept in all other particulars. For if the soule bee more worth, and must be more carefully attended on than the body (as it is no reason the handmaid should take place of the Mistrisse), then those things which do after a peculiar manner concerne the good and profit thereof, must not be neglected for such as do more specially helpe the state of the body outwardly. Lastly, if some outward duty of religion haue been put off from the time, wherein it should be performed, by some sudden and vnexpected businesse, that required such haste (as in such case ordinary duties of religion may be deferred) then some ordinary businesse of lesse waight must (in recompence) giue place to that exercise afterwards, and a man must find time for that, whether it bee reading, praying, or meditating, by leauing vndone (for that space) something that may be better spared. And thus you haue heard what bee those speciall euils, which lie in waite to cousten vs of our good time, and how they may be preuented. And so the first part is handled; namely, from what, Time is to be redeemed.

Now followes to shew, what it is that is to bee redeemed, and so you shall fully know wherein this

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this duty consists. Now by Time, the Apostle meanes two things: First, the very passing away of houres and minutes, the space and leasure of any thing; and secondly, the good occasions or opportunities that fall out in this space. For the word in the Originall, signifies not alone the very sliding of minutes, but the space considered also with some speciall fitnesse, that it hath for some good, which we call the season of it. Now for the first, it shall not be needfull to say any more, being that euery one knowes, that euery thing must haue some space wherein to be done. And he that will auoide the five forenamed euils, shall neuer want time, or the space wherein to doe or get good. But for the occasions and fit opportunities that fall out, now for this, now for that, in this space, it is some more skill to find them out, and make vse of them.

Now these seasons are all of two sorts: First, such whereby a man may more easily get some good to himselfe: Secondly, such, whereby a man may with more fitnesse and ease doe some good. Of the first sort, namely, seasonable opportunities to get good, I will name three particulars, which are most needfull to be considered, and by proportion of which, any mā may come to the knowledge of other like. The first, when God continues the Gospell, offering daily the Word and Sacrament, and calling to repentance and amendment of life; this is the season of repenting; this is the harvest wherein wee may reape Christ, if we be not negligent; this is the acceptable yeere of the Lord, in which one shall be receiued, if he returne. Whilest

wisedome lifts vp her voyce ; whilest her messengers come daily to inuite vs ; whilest her gates stand open, and her dinner stands ready drest, whilest her message is done vnto vs ; all this time if a man will striue and endeuour to turne from his sin, to leaue his folly, and forsake his scorning, he shall be a welcome guest, she will accept him, helpe him, and giue him an encrease of grace, till he become strong with her meates.

Whosoeuer liues vnder the preaching of the Gospell, hath this priuiledge annexed to the outward teaching, that if he will but striue and pray to God, to giue him strength to repent and amend his waies and turne to him, God will (vpon his promise) heare his prayers and assist him : but when the Gospell is gone, then the date is past, a man may call, and not be heard ; and crie, and not be regarded. So then euery man redeems this season of the Gospell, when he giues himselfe to consider seriously of those faults which hee findes in himselfe, and heares sharply reprobued in the word, and hereupon resolues to forsake them, and doth not onely his owne best endeuour, but earnestly calls vpon God for his helpe, without which his power is but weakenesse and ineffectuall ; when hee doth also duly ponder vpon the holy Commandements that hee heares preached, and those exhortations that are daily sounded in his eares to moue him to doe such duties as God requires, and hereupon concludes with himselfe to set about this worke, and craues the strength of God to beare him through in the same. And when he doth



doth aduisedly thinke of the promises that are generally proclaimed, and labours to get some assurance that he is such a one to whom the right of these promises appertaine: thus doing, I say, one redeemes the time wisely, and makes his advantage of the Gospell while it continues, which is a thing that all men should doe: but so rare in the world, as that it is wonder the Lord hath so patiently continued his louing voyce, when men scoffe at it and will not heare. The Lord hath and doth send his Prophets amongst vs, as hee did among the Iewes, rising vp earely, and sending them, which with all earnestnes do proclaime the dangerous euent that shall follow vpon prophane-nesse, neglect and contempt of Gods word, breaking of his Sabbath, railing, wrathfulnesse, whoredome, wantonnesse, couetousnesse, theeuing, oppressing, slander, lying, and such like: yet how many runne on in these euils presumptuously, rushing like the horse into the battaile, with an vnreasonable boldnesse, not fearing any danger, and shutting their eares against these reproofes, as the deafe Adder doth, that they may not be moued by them to amendment: ah, how contrary is this to redeeming the time? If any man haue hitherto lost the season, let him now grow wise, and euen at this time turne to God, and begge power to forsake these finnes. How often and how earnestly are men exhorted to all good workes by the continuall voyce of God, speaking vnto them by his seruants: to reade the word of God daily; to pray priuately; to meditate vpon the VWord;

to watch ouer their daies; and to call themselues to a reckoning euery day for the faults committed in the day; yet who regards this voyce? who marks these exhortations? where is one, that hath enioyned himselfe to some constancie in praying, reading, and the forenamed duties? This is to sleepe in haruest, a most foolish practice and vnwise: wherefore whilest there is yet a little time left, whilest wee haue the light, let vs walke in it, that we be not ouertaken with darknesse. He that hath not yet begun, let him be sorrie that he hath put it off so late, and now set foot into these waies of God, whilest God sets out his word as a candle to direct him, and as his hand to leade him by. The promises of God are in like sort published amongst vs. Happinesse is held vp as a reward to all true hearted Christians, and the crowne of life is proposed to those, which are sound and faithfull members of Iesus Christ. And yet as though all were sure to get it, or it were not worth seeking by any, the most men flatter themselues in their sinnes, and will needs promise these good things to themselues, when they haue no assurance or prooffe out of Gods word, wherby to lay claim or title to them. This is a grieuous and a dangerous neglecting of time. And if any haue not yet made sure worke this way, let him euen now se about it, whilest the Word as a touchstone is before him, by which he may trie himself, and which will make him such a one as he should be, if he will striue to follow it, and pray for abilitie to be ruled by it. So then whilest God holds out his benefits

fits, and stands with his armes open to accept vs, let vs take his benefits, and be perswaded to come vnto him in good earnest; let it bee too late to tra-uaile when mid-night shal come, in stead of noone day. This is the first and chiefeſt opportunitie of getting good : namely, to ioyne with the Gospell, and follow it with our endeauours and prayers, by which it shall be made effectuell vnto vs.

The second opportunitie of getting good, is in time of youth and health, whileſt the vigour and strength of the body and mind is fit for labour, and capable of instruction. And *Salomon* in his booke of Penance, viz. Ecclesiastes, bids, *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, before the euill dayes come.* These dayes of youth and health are good dayes, when hee which will vse them, hath his memory stedfast to cal to mind his euill waies, that he may bewaile them, and to treasure vp good instructions and promises that may guide & comfort him; when the lims will ioyne with the mind, & the mind hath the body as a fit instrumēt to seek the kingdome of heauen, if a man will addresse himselfe vnto it : but the dayes of old age and sicknesse faile much of the commodious fitnesse for good ; the memorie is cracked, the head and vnderstanding is weake ; and especially the time of sicknesse is so filled with paine, so shaken with distractions, and incumbred with griefes and sorowes, that one is nothing fit to repent, or pray, or heare, or to doe any such thing.

Now when a man in the prime of his dayes, and in the fulnesse of his health, will giue himselfe to  
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Eccles. 12. 1.



seeke heauen, will heare the Word, and meditate vpon it, and apply it to himselfe, will confesse his sinnes, and force himselfe to bewaile them; will pray to God for good things, and set the whole course of his life in a right frame; he hath well taken opportunitie, & he shall haue rest in his latter dayes, much quiet and contentment, at least much strength and assistance in his sicknesse, because hee hath something in store against the time of want.

But alas, how doe the common sort of men bewray their monstrous folly in this behalfe? What more common, than that sottish and brutish speech, at least such ignorant & profane thoughts; men will repent when they bee old, and cry God mercy when they feele themselues sick, and amend all when they be ready to go out of the world? and foolish man, thou knowest not whether thou shalt die suddenly; whether thou shalt haue thy wits and senses; or whether thou shalt haue power of heart to make the least colour of repentance in those extremities. How many haue died suddenly? how many sottishly? and yet how doe men for all these warnings, deferre the best businesse, namely, the worke of repentance and turning to God (which will require the whole strength of the soule) to the worst and most crasie time of sicknes or old age? As if a prisoner, at what time a man was offering him a pardon, and calling vpon him to take it, some good space before the Assises, should say, Nay, let me alone, I will not looke after my pardon, till immediately before I am to come before the Iudge: this were a most fond part,

part, especially, if it were so, that the theefe knew not whether the next day should bee the day of his arraignment or no: so the case stands betwixt the Lord and vs; if any man therefore hath been so little carefull of his owne eternall good, as to put off repentance and conuersion till that dead time, or doth foster any such harmefull conceite in his heart, let him now cast it out, and now that he hath his health and strength, vpon better deliberation take in hand this worke.

Be not so extreame mad, as to giue more time to the Diuell than to God, especially to giue the principall time. He were a foolish traeller, that would willingly gallop al the day quite cōtrary to his way; and being told of it, would answer, When it drawes towards Sun-set, I will turne into the right way. Why bee men thus blockish for their soules, that knowing themselves to be out of the way of life, will yet of purpose deferre to set their feete into the right path, till sicknesse or age, when the Sunne of their life is at the point of setting? Ah, let our Prouerbe teach vs more wit: *Make Hay while the Sunne shines.* Turne, turne, whilst thou hast health and strength, vse all to get repentance and saluation. The last chiefe opportunitie of getting good, is, when a man hath company, and is in the society of some godly wise man, able to giue sound counsell and direction, able to answere all doubts, obiections, and scruples of ones mind; now there is a fit opportunitie to grow in wisdome, to be resolved of all doubts, and to seeke direction.

So then, a man ought not to suffer bashfulness,

or other foolish matters to put by that good communication, whereby he might enrich his soule. It is a speciall fauor of God, that any man can come where his seruants are that haue excellent gifts; and he doth depriue himselfe of much good, that will not seeke to benefit himselfe by them. When the woman of Samaria perceiued Christ to bee a Prophet, she proposed her doubt vnto him, albeit hee was a stranger. When *Iohn* Baptist might be come to, the Publicans and sinners came and asked what they should doe. Whilest the Iayler had *Paul* in his keeping, he came to aske that needfull question: *What shall I doe to be saued?* So if there be any man, whose heart is perplexed with some doubt, or ouerburdened with some tentation, or ouermastered by some sinne, it is a part of good discretion for such a one, to goe and seeke the aduice of some able Christian or wise man, before that either himselfe be too far gone, or hee want the opportunitie of such a counsellor or helper. These be three speciall occasions of obtaining good to a mans owne soule from things without him: In all which to take the time is a most cōmendable point of wisdom, but to be negligent is such folly as *Salomon* reprocues, when he saith, *that a foole hath a price in his hand to get wisdom, but he wants a heart.* Oh that men would beware of this heartlesnes, and take heed of losing their price, by which they might get wisdom. Now I come to speake of the occasions of doing good: and these are either in others, or in themselves. First, in others, and that for their soule and body. Sometimes a man shall  
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finde a kind of tractablenesse in those with whom hee hath to deale, that their eares stand open, and they are ready to drinke in an exhortation or re-prooffe, by reason of some affliction that is vpon them, or some need they haue of our help, or such like occasion. Here is time for a kinde and sound admonition, then a man ought in all loue, and yet with all plainnesse to follow the occasion, *striking* (as our prouerbe is) *whilest the iron is hot*, speaking when hee sees him in the melting vaine, readie to take all wel, and in good part. And so *Elibu* notes, that when a man is brought to his death-bed, and to abhorre all worldly delights, then his eares are bored, and then there is worke for an interpreter: before the bones clattered, and the mourners looked for the funerall, an interpreter was despised, but now his words are obserued: thus a man may doe much good to his neighbours or seruants soule, if hee waite for a time when he is fit to receiue admonition, and then giues him it; as the husbandman in drie weather waites for a shower of raine, and then sets in his plow. Againe, for the body, sometimes one shall meete with one that hath true neede, that is, in distresse for his bodily estate, and doth indeed want reliefe; this is an occasion and fit time to shew liberalitie; now a man must open his purse, and be ready to giue freely; I meane not, that euery time a man meets a begger he should be giuing, (for to those a man should not giue, but in the very extremitie of necessitie), but if our brother hath been afflicted by any losse, through fire, or such like, (that hee doe not make

himself needy by idlenesse, but it comes vpon him by some hand of God); here is an obiekt fit for mercie, and here one may be seasonably liberall; here is an altar, offer the sacrifice of almes vpon it, which is a thing wherewith God is well pleased. Some other time, sparing may bee more fit, but now is a season to be more free of gift, and open handed.

There is an occasion of doing good offered in others, wherein I haue named these two particulars, that euery man might accordingly take notice of other like. Then, there is also occasion of doing good offered in ones selfe, whether by some outward thing that befalls him, or by some inward stirring of the minde and affections: as outwardly when a time comes in, wherein we haue receiued some more speciall benefit; this should prouoke vs to more thankfulness by remembrance of the benefit.

Thus this time of Christs Natiuitie should (if any way) be celebrated, that it might turne to an occasion of more heartie thanksgiuing, and more true obedience vnto Christ, that gaue himselfe for our finnes, and tooke our nature vpon him, that in it he might beare our iniquities. So when wee be in the enioying of Gods creatures, whilest we be eating and drinking, or such like, here is a speciall season to lift vp the heart to God, and to kindle a flame of praise by this fewell, that our thanks might be so much the more earnest, by how much wee haue a more present feeling of Gods mercie, and doe euen taste how good he is.

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On the other side, a man is sometimes pressed with a sore crosse and affliction that pincheth his soule; here is a very fit occasion of humbling ones selfe, and examining ones heart: for in these afflictions God calls to humiliation for the most part, which dutie being performed, after, a man may reioyce in his affliction; but whilest the burthen of the crosse is heauie, here is a notable meanes to further one in the worke of humiliation; and if one can take the time when God smites, hee may (at least he ought) cause his heart to stoop before him with more ease, than when hee was at more ease for his body. Againe, sometimes a man hath a more inward stirring of his affections, which he cannot haue at another time; this must be followed, greedily taken, sometimes at the Sermon, or vpon some other occasion, a man hearing or thinking of his sinne, and the punishment due thereunto, hauing a kind of pricking in his hart, and some touch of remorse within him, his conscience begins to tell him that all is not well, and he growes to some orderly conclusion; sure I will now be sorrie for this fault, and amend it: now if one will follow this motion, and goe after God when hee calles (for this is one of his inward callings) and not shoulder it out with fond mirth, but nourish it by a plaine confession of his sinne to God, and an heartie begging of grace and strength from him, to doe that which he now sees he should do; this will come to godly sorrow, and so to repentance: but else if hee choake it and quench it, it will vanish, and the heart will be more hard fro-



zen in the dregs of sinne. So that if there be any, whose heart at this time at the speaking of these words, whose soule smites him for his swearing, lying, Sabbath-breaking, whoredome, drunkenness, gaming, couetousnesse, railing, or the like sin; let him when hee is gone out of the Church, cast himselfe downe in the presence of God, confesse this is his sinne or sinnes freely, without dissembling; labour to be more sorrowfull for them than euer he was, and pray to God to pull him out of this mire. This if hee doe, he shall take the time, he shall be a conuert, the Lord will receiue him, as the vnthrifty prodigall sonne was receiued, and by redeeming the time he shall finde redemption to his soule. But if he despise this admonition of God, his soule shall be more feared than before, his heart shall be deliuered to a greater hardnesse and senselesnesse than euer before, and so be further off from repentance and life.

But alas, the franticke dealing of men in this case is too palpable, and to be wondred at, when Gods word strikes vpon them, when they feelee the keenenesse of it, when the threatnings haue cut, so that they smart for it; then they runne to dicing, carding, drinking, dancing, &c. as it were of set purpose to driue away the spirit of God, that was comming towards them to heale their soule. None is so mad to take such courses for his bodie, that when he feeles the sore to smart, then to runne from the Physitian, and couer it ouer with a clout, or striue to forget it: yet for their soules a number deale so senselesly in this thing as much

as in any other, verifying that name which the holy Ghost hath giuen vnto them, when hee termes them mad men: for it is a propertie peculiar to a mad man, that feeling paine, he will hate the Physician, and runne away from him that would help. Oh, that those of vs which haue hitherto been so mad, would returne now to their mindes, and to God to be healed! Again, sometimes a mans heart is stirred vp with an inward and secret reioycing or gladnesse. Then saith *S. James*, *If any man be mer-ry, let him sing Psalmes*; now hee shall doe it with a cheerefull courage indeed; and therefore *David* would in such a case rise at midnight to sing a Psalm, rather than he would lose the season, when it would relish with him so well.

*James 5.13.*

Sometimes also a man or a woman shall feelee a secret pensiuenesse growing ouer his heart, so that it euen melts, as the ground that thawes after a frost, and he could euen weep abundantly, teares offer themselves in a full measure. Here is an excellent occasion of renewing ones repentance. Now whateuer be ones company, whateuer be the matter in hand, except it be of absolute necessitie, let him leaue it off, and betake him to his chamber or some secret place, let him fall on his knees; now let him open his mouth and acknowledge his sins against himselfe, giuing vent to his griefe, and turning all to godly sorrow, whatsoeuer the occasion was at first. Thus if any body doe, his repentance shall receiue a notable encrease: but if hee passe it ouer, his heart will not answere his desire another time. Furthermore, sometimes a mans heart is earnestly

nestly moued with some hungrie desire to enioy some grace of God, and great longing after some Christian vertue: now let him in the heat & flame of his desire addresse himselfe to prayer; then one shall send vp such piercing cries, and giue such a loud knock against y<sup>e</sup> gates of Christs mercie, that he cannot chuse but heare, and send one back with an almes, as it were; thus he redeems the time: but else his desires will be so cold and chill at another time, that he shal scarce thrust a petition out of his lips, and then these drop down at his feete, and do him little good. And thus in euery other (through the turning of our affectiōs) we must follow Gods spirit, yea, or nature when it leades vs, wisely turning all to spirituall vses. And thus you may perceiue what it is to redeeme the time, and how it may be attained. Now let vs come to some brieft application of the point.

*Vse.*

First, this point thus explained meets with a number of imperfections euen in the best, and him that is most carefull of his waies; of which we are now to take notice, & purpose amendment, if we haue not hitherto considered of them. For this is a fault to which a man (euen in a good measure spiritual) is subiect for want of redeeming the time, that he comes to that lazie passe now and then, as he hath nothing to do, nothing whereabout to settle himselfe. It is a carnal vnsetlednes in a Christian to be so negligēt of his time, as that he should haue any minute of time, which he knowes not how to be-  
now vpon some good & profitable vse. The Lord offers such a multitude of occasions to doe and re-  
ceiue



ceiue good, that if we could with wisdom take the, there is no houre passeth vs, in which we might not do or get some good. And if there be nothing else, yet this is something whereabout he hath good occasion to be busied, euen to fall out with himself, because he hath nothing (I meane he sees nothing that he hath to do). Sometimes if men see their seruants standing idle & vnbusied, they can aske them with a kind of indignatiō, What, can you find nothing to do? And sure the Lord might come with this question diuers times to vs, and say, as it is in this parable: *Why stand you all the day idle?* asking whether the world were so empty of occasions, and our selues so perfectly wel, as that we can find nothing to do? But there is no houre passeth vs, which wee should not find fit for some good thing, if we could catch the opportunitie before it be turned, & did not harme our selues for want of diligent redeeming the time.

Yet there are other faults, of which Christiāns are to be warned: as to begin with the last first. How many be there that are so stuffed with worldly businesses, and yet are greedy of more, as that they cā not find leisure one houre in a day, nay scarce in a week, to bestow vpon reading, praying, meditating or conferring? Yea, as though time were made for nothing but to seek wealth and transitory things, so it is the chiefeſt of their care. It appeares that such labour not for cōscience but for gaine, because they cannot breake off ordinary labours so long, as well to performe ordinary duties of religion. Many may say (with grieve enough if they did well) that their hāds are so full of the world, as that they can scarce  
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through the weeke, take the Bible into their hands to reade any thing therein, vnlesse perhaps it be in the Church at some publike meeting. Thus, men which are borne to a better inheritance, are content to weare out theselues in the earth, as if they were to perish in the earth with other baser creatures. Here is one fault to be amended then: let no Christian bestow so much time in the world, as that hee cannot find sufficient to seeke heauen & the things thereof. Then for the matter of sports, me thinkes some Christians should euen shrink, before y word of reproofe comes to them, when they may thinke of so many houres spent, such a day at bowles; so many (it may be) the next day in shooting; so many the third day in shouel-boord, or the like exercises: happily in themselves not vnlawful, and when they come to reckoning for religious exercises, y count comes in very slowly, but the minutes or quarters, some halfe quarter of an houre or thereabouts bestowed such a day in praying alone, and some three or foure daies after, about a quarter of an houre in reading, and (it may be) the next weeke, some halfe quarter more in meditation: and thus if the expenses of time were written in our debt-books, as they be in Gods, we might euen blush to reade so many *Items* for pleasure and sport, and scarce one or two in a side for priuate religious exercises. Then for our words: may we not hang down our heads with shame, to thinke that God made our tongues, and we speak scarce one word in an hundred to his glory? Idle words; euen many of those whom we are to regard as Christians, count them no faults, neither come

come to repent for them; it was but a word out of the way, say they. But this power to speake (being a gift peculiar to men above all beasts) ought to be more preciouslly regarded, than that it should be abused for base trifles. Then for idle thoughts; who makes question of them almost? Alas, we do not remember that God hath searching eyes and fierce, which pierce into the depth of ones soule. Wee dreame that thoughts are not so much, and spare our selues in our vnthriftnes, whē we should deale more religiously with our selues. Lastly, some might be reprobued for too long lying in bed, and spending more houres in slugging or sleeping, than health & strength doth require: many perhaps will think that it is left to their own pleasure, & that the Preacher is too busie, if he take vpon him to teach thē when to rise, as though it were no fault to oversleep themselves. Indeed some old and sickly mens bodies must take it whē they may; but for the greatest part of men, if they knew what good the first halfe houre of the early morning spent in religious exercises would bring them, they would not loue sleep so well, as for it to neglect them. It is well said, *He that seeks me early, shall find me*, and it well may be literally vnderstood. Therefore (brethren) there is none but may see a fault in himself in these respects, some or al of them, and happy is he that resolues to mend it. Therefore if you will take good counsel, do thus whē you come home. Think, alas, if time must be reckoned for, and should be redeemed, how far am I behind hand with God, that (what for sleepe, what for play, what for idle babling, what for vaine

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thoughts,



thoughts, and excessive worldlines) I cannot make a good account of the fortith, yea of the hundreth part of my time? And then grieue because thou hast bin such an vnthrif of time, & now begin carefully to spare before all be gone. But now heere is a re-proofe more sharp for some others, that are not willing to heare of that care. Tell them they must not spend a whole day, or a whole night in playing and sporting. What not at Christmas? (say they) why, you are too precise: well, but yet vouchsafe to consider a little what God speakes. Thou saist, this is too much precisenes, & so saith the world; but y<sup>e</sup> Apostle bids to walke precisely or warily, redeeming the time: and he that wil take time to card or dice, and to vse lawfull recreations immoderately (I meane so as to be at his play the greater part of the day, & it may be some, if not the most of the night too) shall pay full dearely for it: either he must repent, & vndoe this with much griefe & sorrow of heart, or else he must smart for it hereafter worse in hell. I would not deale ouer sharply with thee: but take Gods louing admonition, & let him haue one tenth part of the foure and twenty houres: yea more a good deale than so, now that thou hast more leasure than ordinary. And here is yet a kind of people that are to be rigorously handled, such as are all gamesters, that spend no one houre waking, but vpon pleasure: the world calls them scatter-goods, and the Lord wil call them scatter-houres, that do misspend both goods & houres. Such (let the think of themselves how they will) as do make gaming the greatest part (if not all) of their occupation, must be content to  
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heare that they haue no portion in heauen, as they can keepe no portion in earth. How can one haue treasure in heauen, that neuer laid vp any there? if God hate a gamester, so that hee will not giue him good clothes to his backe, (now he hath threatned hat hee shall be clothed with rags) hee will much esse affoord him a seate in heauen. And howsoeuer for a time they may ruffle it out, and be clad better than their more laborious neighbors, yet this trade will surely vndoe them; for they haue brought this perill vpon theselues, that either God must not be true, or they must not be rich, hee must forfeit his ruth, or they their goods, besides their name and soule: wherefore let such as haue hitherto giuen their daies to such an vnsanctified & inordinate course, surcease frō the practice of their lewdnes; and both in conscience for their soules sake, & in discretion for their goods sake, resolute to become better husbands of time, lest their gaming on earth bring beggery to their latter daies, and damnation to their soules for euer. Lastly, let all good Christiāns be admonished to make precious account of their time, and with much carefulnes to take the seasons & opportunities of God, according as they haue heard it is their duty. Christians either indeed purpose to learne, or else make a shew of such a purpose when they come to Church. Ah, that we might all learne this thrift, & practice it as we haue heard: begin to day, & hold on still. Now is a time of remembring the most admirable worke of Christs incarnation, when hee was made flesh of the Virgin to purge vs from sin, and saue vs from wrath by the shedding of his

his blood, and suffering which hee endured in his flesh. Giue not all (ah, why should wee giue any of it?) this time to play, chiefly to beueling, sur-fetting or wantonnesse, but take some space to consider of the greatnesse of this benefit, and to be thankfull proportionably thereunto. I would I might hope to preuaile with any by this exhortation: but howsoeuer, it is needfull to be spoken, that none may haue occasiō to pretend ignorance. You see or might see your duties in this behalfe: and in practising the same shall finde the benefit of it. But fooles will scorne admonition, and those that haue accustomed themselves to lust, wil not be intreated to pull their necks from out their hard yoke, and to serue a better Master: nay, so foolish are a number, that they thinke to doe Christ great honor in spending the day whereon they imagine that hee was borne, and some few that follow it, in more than ordinary riot and sinfull excesse: as though he were a God that loued iniquitie; and were delighted with drinking, & swilling, & gaming, and swearing, and surfetting, and all disorder: but those that know Christ, know full well that hee is not pleased with such pranks. Wherefore if wee will spend a day to Christ, spend it more religiously & soberly than all other daies, not more prophanely and luxuriously. We should neither forget his birth: but when wee obserue some speciall time of remembring it, shew that wee remember his goodnesse by doing good, more honor to his name, not by committing more rebellion against him. And to conclude, as at this time so at al times, let al men that would haue their soules



soules well furnished with inward substance, play the good husbands in taking time & opportunitie. Whensoever we find any fit occasion of getting or doing good in our selues or others, let it not slip, but lay hold vpon it, and vse it. It is ioyfull to think (if we could think of it seriously) what commoditie this thrift would bring; how much knowledge and godlines might he get, that would keep his tongue and heart carefully to good matters? What a large treasure of good works might he haue, that would be ready whensoever his neighbours necessitie called for help, to stretch out his hand for his reliefe? and when he saw him fit for an admonition, would wisely bestow it vpon him? how full of grace should his old age & sicknes be, that would giue his health to God, & his first yeeres to the seruice of his soule? how great acquaintance might he get in the palace of Wisedome, that would come to her at her first call, and enter so soone as the doores were set open? how many sins might a man leaue, and how much power should he get ouer al sin, that (when his hart smites him) would turne to God by praier and confession? What great grace would affliction bring, if a man would settle himselfe to humiliation, and gage his heart in time of affliction? how much thankfulness might hee haue, that would lift vp his heart to God in the fruition of euery blessing? how many seruent prayers might he store vp in heauen that would not fore-flow time, when hee feeles his desires earnest? how comfortably might he weepe ouer Christ, and how plentifully, that would take the tide of teares: and turne all pensiuenesse to this vse?

60

use? and how many sweet and cheerefull Psalmes might a Christian sing, if hee would turne all his mirth into a Psalm, and offer it vp to God? Oh, what a large encrease of grace would this care bring? how should his soule thrive, that would be thus husbandly? Surely as the cōmon speech hath commended a little land well tilled, before much more ground that is carelesly dressed: so the weaker means with this care, would be more available to enrich the heart, than are the strongest without it. It is not the greatnesse of ones living that makes one rich, but the good employing & wary husbanding of it: so it is not the greatnes of the meanes, but the diligent redeeming of time, to make use of the meanes, that makes the soule wealthy. But if great meanes ioyne with great care, the encrease will be so much the more large, as a large living with good husbandry. But alas, hence comes it, that some in the store of all good meanes of saluation are very beggars and banckrupts, because of their negligence to take the time and fit season. They let passe all good opportunities, & care not for any occasion for the soule, and how can their soule thrive? Wherefore let every true hearted Christian learne this wisdom, and practise it, as ever he desires to store his soule with that wealth, which will make him glorious in the eyes of God, and much set by even in heaven among the Angels. And thus much for this time, and this duty of redeeming the time.

F I N I S

